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U.S. tells older people to stay home, all ages to avoid crowds

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, ANDREW TAYLOR and JILL COLVIN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House on Monday urged all older Americans to stay home and everyone to avoid crowds and eating out at restaurants as part of sweeping guidelines meant to combat an expected surge of coronavirus cases.

President Donald Trump, in a marked shift in tone about a crisis that has enveloped the globe, for the first time acknowledged that the pandemic may send the U.S. economy into a recession and suggested that the nation may be dealing with the virus until "July or August."



President Donald Trump listens to Vice President Mike Pence during a press briefing with the coronavirus task force, in the Brady press briefing room at the White House, Monday, March 16, 2020, in Washington.

Continued on next page

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The guidelines, which would rewrite the norms of American society for half a month, were released as the U.S. government tried to blunt the impact of an expected surge of coronavirus cases, racing to bolster testing and aid even as the financial markets tumbled. Among the new recommendations: Over the next 15 days, Americans should not gather in groups of more than 10 people, schooling should be at home and discretionary travel and social visits should be avoided. If anyone in a household tests positive for the virus, everyone who lives there should stay home. The administration did not define what an older American was in terms of the recommendation to stay home.

"We will rally together as one nation and we will defeat the virus," Trump said. "We can turn the corner and turn it quickly." The president, in an appearance in the White House briefing room, when asked when the pandemic would subside, said that "if we do a really good job" the crisis could pass by the height of summer. That was a far less optimistic take than in his earlier predictions that it could be over within weeks. He also acknowledged that the virus, which has battered the global markets, may send the nation's economy into a recession, a potentially brutal blow for an incumbent in an election year. Trump was unusually somber about the matter after playing it down for weeks. He acknowledged the pandemic was "not under control" in the United States or globally but said he did not yet plan to call for domestic travel restrictions and said he was reluctant to advise states to can-



In this April 22, 2019 file photo, Chloebella Frazier, 4, of Washington, takes part in the annual White House Easter Egg Roll on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington.

Associated Press

cel the primary elections ahead. Without providing details, he said "we're going to back the airlines 100%," a note of reassurance for an industry crippled by travel bans and fears of spreading the virus. The expansive guidelines were issued on a day of fast-moving developments in a capital resplendent in cherry blossoms but awash in anxiety. Congress convened to try to finish an aid package and consider another one behind it. The Supreme Court postponed oral arguments for the first time in over a century. And the U.S. surgeon general said that the United States is about where Italy was two weeks ago in the coronavirus struggle, a sign that infections are expected to rise. "When you look at the projections, there's every chance that we could be Italy," Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams told Fox News. Yet he said the U.S. has opportunities to miti-

gate the pandemic. Two weeks ago, Italy had 1,700 cases of coronavirus and had reported 34 deaths. Now, Italy is reporting an estimated 25,000 cases and more than 1,800 deaths. About 3,800 cases have been reported in the United States and so far, more than 65 people have died from coronavirus. Although the numbers may not be directly comparable, the trajectory is, as Adams sees it. The administration also alleged that a foreign disinformation campaign was underway aimed at spreading fear among Americans already spooked by the pandemic. On Sunday, federal officials began confronting what they said was a deliberate effort by a foreign entity to make Americans think the government was going to impose a nationwide quarantine. Agencies took coordinated action Sunday evening to assure Americans that the government was not planning to do

that. And on Monday, national security officials said there had been a cyber attack involving the computer networks of Health and Human Services, but the networks were operating normally. They didn't detail the nature or scope of the problem or identify the foreign entity. On Fox News, Adams claimed the U.S. has "turned the tide" on testing, a critical part of tracking and containing pandemics, but whether that is true remains to be seen. The U.S. effort has been hobbled by a series of missteps, including flaws with the testing kits first distributed by the federal government and bureaucratic hurdles that held up testing by private laboratories. On Capitol Hill, a nearly empty House met to adopt a resolution to make what were described as technical changes to polish off a coronavirus response measure designed to speed testing for the virus and

provide sick leave to workers kept home because of it. It went into recess before adopting the measure, however. The measure is likely to pass the Senate this week, though the timing is uncertain. The 100 senators, with a few exceptions, were expected to gather Monday evening, despite the federal public-health guidelines prohibiting large gatherings. Talks are already underway on another bill to try to blunt the damage the virus is doing to the economy. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said it will focus on direct financial help to individuals, help for businesses such as the airline industry, and further steps to support the health system. Nearby, the Supreme Court said it is postponing arguments for late March and early April because of the coronavirus, including a round over subpoenas for Trump's financial records. The last time oral arguments were postponed was in 1918, due to the Spanish flu epidemic. In 2001, they were relocated, but not postponed, after an anthrax scare. Larry Kudlow, director of the National Economic Council, said the White House is working toward \$800 billion in fiscal relief, with about half of that having been approved through executive actions and legislation and much of the remainder being sought through a payroll tax cut that has been met coolly by both parties in Congress. The Federal Reserve said Sunday it was taking emergency action to slash its benchmark interest rate to near zero. But the Fed's move did not calm markets. The Dow Jones Industrial Average finished Monday down nearly 3,000 points. □

U.S. airport security officers fear exposure as cases rise

WASHINGTON (AP) — At least six Transportation Security Administration officers have tested positive for the new coronavirus and dozens were in self-quarantine Monday as the disease takes an increasing toll on an agency critical to the safety of U.S. aviation. TSA said it was providing safety training to employees and operations were running smoothly. It stood by its decision to not provide officers with respirators as their union requested last week. Union leaders said they were still concerned, even as a major drop in traffic at the nation's airports seemed to reduce the potential for exposure. Officers screen 2 million passengers around the country on a typical day. Joe Shuker, a vice president for the union representing workers in the region that includes Philadelphia and Washington, said he was surprised the government hadn't shut down air traffic. "Our guys can't stay six feet away from anybody, we're patting people down," Shuker said. "We're putting people at risk for no reason." TSA over the weekend announced the positive test of an officer at Orlando International Airport who had last been at work March 10. The officer was being treated and all employees who came into contact with the person over the previous two weeks were in self-quarantine at home. There was an earlier positive test by an officer at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood

International Airport and four at the airport in San Jose, California. The TSA did not disclose the total number of employees in isolation because of the exposure but the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents the nearly 46,000 officers, said about 40 workers at just the San Jose airport were told to self-quarantine. Around the globe, airline bookings are plummeting and cancellations soaring as governments restrict travel and people fear being enclosed in an airplane for several hours during a pandemic that has sickened more than 180,000 people and killed more than 7,100. TSA said checkpoints remain open though some lanes may be closed. Shuker said the Philadelphia airport was unusually quiet. "There are enough people because nobody is flying," he said. "This place should be packed right now on a Monday." AFGE sent a letter last week to the TSA director asking that he provide respirators because surgical masks they were given are insufficient for officers who "are uniquely susceptible to this outbreak." The request was denied. The agency said in response to The Associated Press that neither the CDC nor the Occupational Safety and Health Administration recommends respirators for the officers and says the equipment should be reserved for workers in the riskiest situations such as

medical personnel. "TSA follows OSHA and CDC guidance related to personnel protection," it said in a written statement. The agency said it was requiring officers to wear nitrile gloves while checking people and baggage to add an extra layer of protection and instructing them not to reuse swabs used in screening, among other measures. Gary Holdsworth, a union vice president for the local in Northern California, said there has not been any mass sickout in response to the outbreak despite the increasing stress of potential exposure. "You don't want to panic and you don't want to be paranoid, but when you are in a spot where you are seeing the



A woman wearing a mask walks through security at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Monday, March 16, 2020, in Arlington, Va.

Associated Press

public every day you have no idea," he said. Greg Biel, a union regional vice president in Portland, Oregon, said workers were frustrated about what they see as a poor job plan-

ning for the outbreak but weren't letting that interfere with their work. "From what I can see, everybody is coming to work and doing the job they were brought on board to do," he said. □

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As Congress eyes economic package, Democrats seek \$750B

By **LISA MASCARO** and **ALAN FRAM**

WASHINGTON (AP) — With an urgency unseen since the Great Recession, Congress is rushing to develop a sweeping economic lifeline for American households and businesses suddenly capsized by the coronavirus outbreak.

Democrats said at least \$750 billion would be needed.

"We will need big, bold, urgent federal action to deal with this crisis," Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said.

Republicans often reluctant to spend federal dollars did not flinch at the head-spinning number, as a roster of America's big and small industries — airlines, hotels, retailers — lined up for aid.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said he wants a "comprehensive" approach with "significant steps" for the economy, particularly Main Street businesses. He opened the Senate on Monday with a message to Americans: "The Senate stands with you."

The rush to inject an infusion of cash and resources into the economy is an effort unlike any since the 2008 economic crisis, with political and economic interventions and eye-popping sums to try to protect Americans from the health and financial fallout. Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, called for sending \$1,000 to every American.

Senators returned to an emptied out U.S. Capitol, clear of tourists or colleagues from the House, to confront an even more dire situation than the one they left for a long weekend, before Trump declared a national emergency.

Pending is the House-



New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, left, listens as Senate Minority Leader Sen. Chuck Schumer of N.Y., speaks during a news conference, Saturday, March 14, 2020, in New York.

Associated Press

passed aid package approved early Saturday — with sick pay, free testing and emergency food — that is endorsed by President Donald Trump and ready to become law.

But it's stalled, for now, as the Senate waits on the House for technical corrections, while navigating its own problems, as some Republican senators panning the package want changes.

All sides — the House, Senate and White House — agree the pending bill is not the last and not nearly enough to handle what's coming. At the start of the month Congress approved \$8.3 billion in initial aid. Trump quickly signed into law the measure, which provided federal agencies money for vaccines, tests and potential treatments, and to help state and local governments respond to the threat.

Schumer floated the Democrats' proposal for at least

\$750 billion to boost hospital capacity, unemployment insurance and other direct aid for American households, businesses and the health care industry. Republican senators were conferring privately over their priorities.

The days ahead will test if Congress can quickly respond to the crisis.

Industries representing a broad swath of the economy are seeking help in withstanding the fallout as schools close and Americans are being told to stay inside, skip nonessential travel and avoid gatherings with 10 people or more.

That means no dining out, no boarding planes, no shopping the malls as a great national shutdown sparks business closures, layoffs and lost paychecks for rents, mortgages and everyday needs.

The nation's largest business organization, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, asked the Trump admin-

istration and Congress on Monday to act rapidly to help companies have access to cash and avert a "potentially devastating" hit to the economy.

The request from the U.S. airlines alone could easily top \$50 billion, according to Airlines for America, the trade group representing the carriers.

"We're going to back the airlines 100%," Trump said at a White House briefing. "We've told the airlines we're going to help them." In a letter to Trump and congressional leaders, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce called for legislation including a three-month cancellation of the taxes companies pay to support Social Security, Medicare and unemployment insurance.

"No family and no business should go bankrupt just because of the temporary disruption in income caused by the coronavirus," said the chamber's CEO, Thom-

as J. Donohue.

The nation's governors were also calling on Congress to swiftly bring economic aid, particularly for the unemployment insurance system to help displaced workers, and fast.

"We need a better response from the federal government," said Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo, a Democrat. "I am out of patience."

Pulling together the new package will challenge the basic logistics of governing as the Congress itself struggled to adapt to the new normal.

House Democrats were told on a conference call they won't be recalled to Washington until the next package is ready for action, according to people familiar with the call but unauthorized to discuss it and granted anonymity.

The 100-member Senate convened for an evening vote — a potentially stunning sight of people gathered. While different authorities around the country have issued conflicting advice, the government said at a Monday news conference that Americans should not gather in groups of more than 10 people over the next 15 days.

The No. 2 Senate Democratic leader, Dick Durbin of Illinois, counting the number of senators on the floor, questioned what example they were setting. He urged swift passage of the House package. "What are we waiting for?" he said.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. □

Holed up in the U.S.: Coronavirus shutdown threatens jobs

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER**
and **TIM SULLIVAN**
Associated Press

Millions of Americans holed up at home against the coronavirus Monday, with many of them thrown out of work until further notice, as authorities tightened the epic clampdown and the list of businesses forced to close across the U.S. extended to restaurants, bars, gyms and casinos.

With the U.S. economy shuddering to a near-halt, the Dow Jones Industrial Average plummeted nearly 3,000 points, or 13%, its biggest one-day percentage loss since the Black Monday crash of 1987.

The rapid work stoppage had Americans fretting about their jobs and their savings, threatened to overwhelm unemployment benefit programs, and heightened fears the country could plunge into a recession.

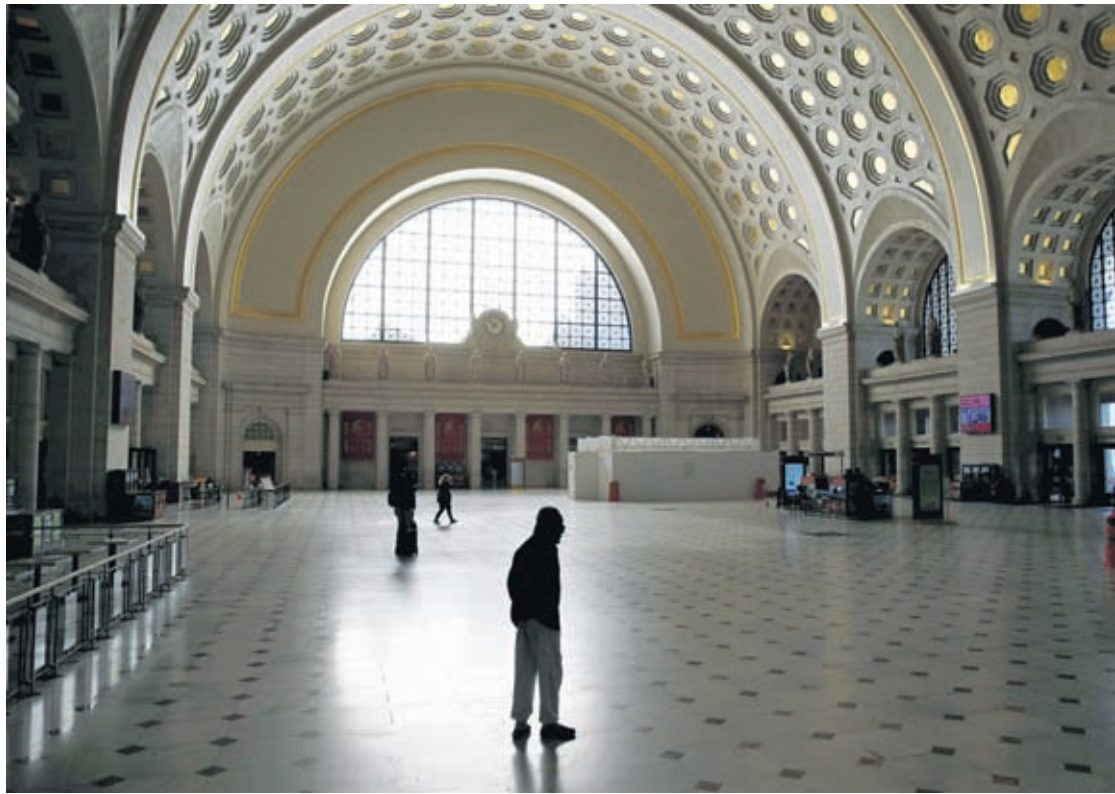
President Donald Trump acknowledged that possibility for the first time and suggested the nation may be dealing with the virus until July or August.

The number of infections in the U.S. climbed to about 4,300, with at least 78 deaths, two-thirds of them in hard-hit Washington state, where many residents of a suburban Seattle nursing home have been cut down by the virus.

Officials in six San Francisco Bay Area counties issued a "shelter-in-place" order affecting nearly 7 million people, requiring most residents to stay inside and venture out only for food, medicine or exercise for three weeks — the most drastic measure taken yet in the U.S. to curb the spread of the virus.

"I know today's order is a radical step. It has to be. We need to act now, all of us," said Dr. Grant Colfax, director of the San Francisco Health Department.

The shutdowns touched every corner of the country: blackjack dealers in Las Vegas, theme park workers in Orlando, Florida, restaurant and bar employees nationwide, and winery workers in California. At least eight states called on



People walk in Union Station's Main Hall in Washington, Monday, March 16, 2020.

Associated Press

all bars and restaurants to close at least part of the day. Casinos shut down in New Jersey.

Tyler Baldwin, a 29-year-old bartender at the Taproom in Seattle's Pike Place Market, one of the city's biggest tourist attractions, shut down early "so I can go home and start figuring out unemployment, food stamps, really whatever the next step to keep myself afloat."

Truckers hauling goods from a port in Virginia are just trying to hang on because cargo volume has dropped so much.

"It's a struggle just to survive right now, just to put food on the table," said Nicole Sapienza, managing member of Coastwide Marine Services in Virginia.

About 82 million people, or three-fifths of the U.S. workforce, are hourly employees. Many of them won't get paid if they don't work. For those in a category that includes restaurant, hotel, amusement park, and casino workers, just one-third have access to paid sick leave, according to Wells Fargo.

Kevin Hassett, a former economic adviser to President Donald Trump, said on CNN that "that the odds of a global recession are close to 100% right now" and predicted the U.S. could lose

about 1 million jobs in April. The economy appears to be decelerating at a much faster pace than during the 2008 financial meltdown.

"This is like an avalanche. It's all happening at once," said Heidi Shierholz, senior economist at the Economic Policy Institute. "And no one knows how long it's going to last."

On the other side of the ledger, Amazon announced it wants to add 100,000 workers to deliver packages amid a surge in online orders from people unable or unwilling to set foot in stores. And gun sales soared in many places as fear took hold around the U.S.

"I've never seen it like this," said Ed Turner, who owns Ed's Public Safety in Stockbridge, Georgia, "This is self-preservation. This is panic. This is 'I won't be able to protect my family from the hordes and the walking dead.'"

With schools closed for tens of millions of children across the country, parents began using lesson plans that included flash cards, online learning, dog walks and creativity sessions. Many did this while juggling work conference calls, emails and memos. Others scrambled to find child care.

The shutdowns were especially devastating for the

many artists and service industry workers in New York who rely on nightlife and live paycheck to paycheck in one of the most expensive cities in the world.

Ralph Anthony, a 38-year-old comic and actor in New York City, had two gigs canceled last week that cost him \$1,000 — money he intended to use to pay next month's bills.

"There's literally no work to go around," he said. "You're living off your savings. You're liquidating your investment portfolio."

Around the country, many restaurants were restricted to takeout or delivery only. But "who's going to come in for carry-outs? Not a lot of people tip on carry-outs," waitress Danielle Livingston of Earl's Diner in Ferndale, Michigan, lamented.

In a letter to Trump and congressional leaders, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce called for swift legislation, including a three-month cancellation of some taxes and an expansion of loans to businesses, to "mitigate the potentially devastating economic effects."

Governors in a number of states said they are growing alarmed by the widening economic damage and effect on workers. Some announced changes to make it easier for people to collect unemployment

benefits. Others accelerated programs to make loans available to small businesses.

Some analysts worry that unemployment benefit systems could be overwhelmed by people seeking aid, as happened during the height of the Great Recession over a decade ago. In fact, the website where businesses could apply for Small Business Administration disaster loans crashed Monday.

On the medical front, four healthy volunteers became the first participants in a clinical trial of an experimental vaccine against the virus, receiving shots at a research institute in Washington state. But officials cautioned that it will take a year to 18 months to fully test and approve any vaccine.

Across the country, health officials, politicians and business leaders talked about "social distancing" and "flattening the curve," or encouraging people to avoid others so as to slow the spread of the virus and keep U.S. hospitals from being overwhelmed with a sudden deluge of patients. Most people who come down with the disease have relatively mild symptoms, but it can be deadly for some, especially the elderly and those with underlying health problems. Most people infected with the virus recover in a matter of weeks. People forced to hunker down at home had to figure out how entertain themselves now that nearly all social gatherings have been banned, canceled or strongly discouraged. Some planned to binge-watch TV, catch up on chores such as cleaning out the basement, exercise at home, do more cooking or catch up on their reading.

"I just started 'Love in the Time of Cholera.' It seemed appropriate," said Beverly Pfeiffer in Silver Spring, Maryland, of the Gabriel Garcia Marquez novel. Worldwide, the outbreak has sickened over 180,000 people and left more than 7,100 dead. □

Court approves PG&E's \$23B bankruptcy financing package

By **MICHAEL LIEDTKE**

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — Pacific Gas & Electric on Monday won court approval to raise \$23 billion to help pay its bills over destructive California wildfires after Gov. Gavin Newsom dropped his opposition to a financing package designed to help the nation's largest utility get out of bankruptcy. The milestone reached during an unusual court hearing held by phone moves PG&E closer to its goal of emerging from one of the most complex bankruptcy cases in U.S. history by June 30.

Newsom has said he fears P&E is taking on too much debt to be able to afford an estimated \$40 billion in equipment upgrades needed to reduce the chances of its electricity grid igniting destructive wildfires in the future. The utility's outdated system triggered a series of catastrophic wildfires in 2017 and 2018 that killed so many people and burned so many homes and businesses that the company had to file for bankruptcy early last year.



In this Jan. 14, 2019, file photo, Pacific Gas & Electric vehicles are parked at the PG&E Oakland Service Center in Oakland, Calif.

But the recent volatility in the financial markets caused by the coronavirus pandemic apparently softened Newsom's stance after PG&E lined up commitments from investors promising to buy up to \$12 billion in company stock. Those guarantees are looming larger, given the turmoil that has caused the benchmark Standard & Poor's 500

index to plunge by roughly 25% during the past three weeks. Because of the company's already shaky condition, PG&E's stock has been hit even harder, with shares losing nearly half their value during the same stretch. The stock fell 12% Monday to close at \$8.95, its lowest price since early December. Given the potential for up-

heaval in the financial markets to persist, PG&E lawyer Paul Zumbro told U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Dennis Montali that the commitments are "critically important." A representative for Newsom said the governor agreed. "People often talk tough when there is a level playing field, but in circumstances, almost all people want to make deal," said Eric Snyder, a bankruptcy lawyer who has been following PG&E's case. Newsom has unusual leverage over PG&E because the company also needs state approval of its bankruptcy plan to qualify for coverage from a wildfire insurance fund that California created last summer. In a statement, PG&E said it's making "good progress" in discussions with Newsom. The governor's office didn't immediately respond to requests for comment about Newsom's change of heart on PG&E's financing pack-

age or other aspects of his talks with the company. Newsom has intensified his focus on the coronavirus during the past two weeks as the disease's outbreak worsened in California, but that doesn't mean the Democratic governor isn't keeping a close watch on PG&E, said Jared Elias, a UC Hastings College of the Law professor who has been tracking the case. "The long-term health of PG&E has to remain a top priority because, God forbid, if this coronavirus remains a problem heading into wildfire season this summer," Elias said.

Besides issuing more stock to raise money, PG&E and its parent company will take on as much as \$11 billion in additional debt while refinancing billions in existing loans.

PG&E primarily needs the cash to pay off \$25.5 billion in claims as part of settlements reached with wildfire victims, insurers and government agencies. That's a fraction of the more than \$50 billion in losses that wildfire victims and insurers had estimated PG&E owed them in the early stages of the bankruptcy case.

Reflecting the complexity of the situation, Montali conceded that the nuances of PG&E's financing package are "beyond my understanding" and put his faith in the parties who put it together that it's now the best option available.

The unusual admission came during an extraordinary hearing that had to be held by phone because Montali's courthouse was closed to try to help limit the spread of the coronavirus. □

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Ex-governor's candidate in Florida says he's entering rehab

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Former Florida candidate for governor Andrew Gillum disclosed Sunday that he is entering a rehabilitation facility, saying he had fallen into a depression and alcohol abuse after losing his bid for the state's highest post.

The Democrat's statement came days after Gillum was named in a South Florida police report Friday that said he was "inebriated" and initially unresponsive in a hotel room along with a male companion where authorities found baggies of suspected crystal methamphetamine.

Gillum, the former Tallahassee mayor who ran for governor in 2018, was not charged with any crime. The Miami Beach police report said Gillum was allowed to leave the hotel for home after he was checked out medically.

Gillum said in his statement

Sunday night that he resolved to seek help after conversations with his family and deep reflection, calling the decision "a wake-up call for me."

"Since my race for governor ended, I fell into a depression that has led to alcohol abuse," he said, pledging to work to "heal fully and show up in the world as a more complete person."

He said he would be stepping down from "all public facing roles" at this time.

"I want to apologize to my family, friends and the people of Florida who have supported me and put their faith in me over the years," he added, requesting privacy for his family.

In an earlier statement after the police report became public, Gillum said that he was in Miami Beach for a wedding and did not use illegal drugs.

"While I had too much to drink, I want to be clear that

I have never used methamphetamines," Gillum, 40, said earlier. "I apologize to the people of Florida for the distraction this has caused for our movement."

According to police, fire rescue crews were called to the Miami Beach hotel around 1 a.m. Friday regarding a suspected drug overdose. Police say Gillum and two other men were in the hotel room.

"Mr. Gillum was unable to communicate due to his inebriated state," the police report said.

Police say one of the men came into the hotel room and found Gillum and Travis Dyson, 30, apparently under the influence of an "unknown substance." Officials began chest compressions on Dyson and he was taken to a hospital, where authorities say he is in stable condition.

Gillum had stable medical signs when authorities re-



In this Nov. 10, 2018 file photo, Andrew Gillum the Democrat candidate for governor speaks at a news conference in Tallahassee, Fla.

Associated Press

turned for a welfare check and was allowed to leave the hotel for home, according to the police report.

Gillum was the first black nominee in a major political party to run for governor in Florida. He lost narrowly to Republican Ron DeSantis in the 2018 election.

Since then, Gillum has mounted an effort to register Democratic voters in

Florida and frequently appears on cable news channels as a political commentator.

In 2019, the Florida Commission on Ethics found probable cause that Gillum violated state ethics laws when he accepted gifts during out-of-town excursions with lobbyists and vendors and failed to report them. □

5 dead, including officer and gunman, in Missouri shooting

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (AP) — Five people including a police officer and a gunman have died in a shooting at a Missouri gas station after the gunman went inside and opened fire, police said Monday.

The dead also include three citizens, Springfield police Chief Paul Williams announced Monday, and an officer was injured along with another citizen.

Williams said police received reports of "multiple shooting calls throughout the city" late Sunday. As officers were responding, witnesses reported a vehicle crashed into a Kum &

Go gas station and convenience store, and the gunman ran inside and began shooting customers and employees, Williams said. The first two officers who arrived were shot.

Other officers pulled the injured officers from the store and then went inside, finding three citizens dead. The gunman also was found dead, apparently from a self-inflicted gunshot, Williams said.

Full Coverage: Shootings Officer Christopher Walsh died at a hospital, Williams said. He was with the Springfield police for 3 1/2 years, was an Army vet-



Springfield Police Chief Paul Williams gets emotional during a press conference as he talks about five people including a police officer and a gunman that died in a shooting at a Missouri gas station after the gunman went inside and starting shooting, police said Monday, March 16, 2020, in Springfield, Mo.

Associated Press

eran and was active in the Army reserves. Officer Josiah Overton, whose injuries are not life-threatening, has been with Springfield police for two years, he said.

"Both officers showed significant bravery and were heroic in their actions," Williams said.

The identifies of the other victims have not been released pending notification of relatives.

Police are still working to determine a motive for the shooting, the chief said.

He said it was too early to comment on the impact the shooting had on his department. □

German virus vaccine firm denies US made takeover offer

**Associated Press
BERLIN (AP) —**

A German company working on a potential vaccine for the new coronavirus denied reports Monday that the U.S. government was angling to acquire it, while German officials sought to ease tensions fueled by the story by insisting the firm would stay in the country. On Sunday, Germany's Welt am Sonntag newspaper, citing unidentified German government sources, reported that the then-boss of CureVac took part in a meeting between pharmaceutical managers and U.S. President Donald Trump in early March. It said Trump apparently was offering the German firm a large amount to secure its work for the U.S. In a tweet Monday, CureVac confirmed it had been

one of the companies at the meeting, but said the media reports about an offer were incorrect. "CureVac has not received from the U.S. government or related entities an offer before, during and since the task force meeting in the White House on March 2," the company wrote. CureVac on Sunday called the reports "speculation," issuing a statement saying that it was working to develop a vaccine and was in contact with a global alliance called the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness, "and many other organizations and authorities worldwide." It rejected "allegations about offers for acquisition of the company or its technology," but that failed to dampen interest in the story, partially fueled by the

responses from German officials. Ahead of CureVac's tweet, Chancellor Angela Merkel's chief of staff, Helge Braun, told the Bild daily that German officials had "very intensive contact" with CureVac over the past two weeks "when there were thoughts of enticing it to the United States." He said the company would get every support to develop a vaccine as quickly as possible. "We also made clear that if a vaccine is developed in Germany, then it is for Germany and the world," he was quoted as saying. "That also convinced the company, so that it will stay." Braun didn't elaborate on the nature of the U.S. interest. Germany's interior minister, Horst Seehofer, was asked

at a news conference Sunday whether he could confirm that the U.S. had tried to take over a German vaccine company for a large amount of money. "I can only say that I have heard repeatedly today from members of the government that this is true," he replied. Economy Minister Peter Altmaier, speaking on ARD television, said that "Germany is not for sale." Meantime the U.S. ambassador to Germany, Richard Grenell, tweeted that "the Welt story was wrong." On Monday when asked about the various officials' statements, a spokeswoman for Altmaier, Beate Baron, said the government's position was that new vaccines "must be available for everyone, and this cannot be about exclusivity." She added that she didn't have

"sufficient information" to confirm that there was an offer. CureVac's chief operating officer, Hans-Werner Haas, told the Tagesspiegel daily that the company and other biotech firms had attended a meeting with Trump and the president signaled that "we should hurry." But he said that CureVac, which is based in Tuebingen, Germany, and has a site in Boston, doesn't know where the "rumor" of an offer from Trump came from and "we don't have an offer." For most people, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, and they recover fully. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. □

Canada closing borders to non-citizens, Americans exempted

By ROB GILLIES

TORONTO (AP) — Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Monday he will close the country's borders to anyone not a citizen, an American or a permanent resident — and even they have to self-isolate for 14 days on arrival — due to the coronavirus pandemic. "Let me be clear: If you are abroad, now is the time to come home," the prime minister said. "If you've just arrived, you must self-isolate for 14 days." He also said those already in the country, "as much as possible should stay home." He spoke outside his residence, where is self isolating after his wife tested positive for the virus. Trudeau said the exemption for Americans, despite the rapid rise of cases in the U.S., was due to "the level of integration of our two economies." The U.S. accounts for 75 percent of the country's exports. "Canada and the United States have the longest un-militarized border in the world and that border is vital to the daily life to people on both side that live of that border," said Dep-



Minister of Health Patty Hajdu looks on as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks during a news conference in Ottawa, Wednesday March 11, 2020.

Associated Press

uty Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland. But she noted that the exemption was not aimed at tourists. "The fact that we are saying to all visitors to Canada,

and all returning Canadians, that they are strongly recommended go into 14-day self isolation in Canada for 14 days," Freeland said. "I don't consider that some-

thing that a tourist would like to do for a holiday." Trudeau said the country is taking "increasingly aggressive steps" to keep everyone safe. The government is restrict-

ing overseas flights to just four airports in Toronto, Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver, and mandating airlines to screen passengers for symptoms of the virus before allowing anyone to board a plane. The number of confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus in Canada more than doubled since Friday, including 32 new confirmed cases in Ontario on Monday. Trudeau said "we can still slow the spread of this virus" but it will take a major adjustment from everyone. Officials in the Pacific Coast province of British Columbia also announced three more deaths, all of them stemming from a long-term care home in North Vancouver where the first death in Canada was reported. Canada has more than 400 confirmed cases and now four deaths. Trudeau's wife, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, tested positive after returning from London. She attended the same event as British actor Idris Elba, who announced Monday he has also tested positive for the virus. She posed for pictures with him. □

UK ramps up virus fight; 12-week isolation for over-70s

By JILL LAWLESS and PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British authorities on Monday dramatically ramped up measures to combat the new coronavirus, urging all U.K. residents to avoid unnecessary contact with others and telling people in the most vulnerable groups to stay at home for three months.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said "now is the time for everyone to stop non-essential contact with others and to stop all unnecessary travel."

"You should avoid pubs, clubs, theaters and other such social venues," he said at a news conference alongside his chief medical and scientific advisers.

Authorities said people over 70, those with chronic illnesses and pregnant women should be "shielded" from social contacts for 12 weeks, starting this weekend.

The U.K. had previously resisted taking some of the tough measures seen in other European countries, which have banned large events, shut schools and closed their borders to slow the spread of the COVID-19 illness.

But Johnson said Monday the number of U.K. cases



A commuter covers her face in London, Monday, March 16, 2020. For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough.

Associated Press

was starting to rise rapidly and "without drastic action" they could double every five or six days. As of Monday, Britain had 1,543 confirmed cases and 53 virus-related deaths.

British authorities now say if anyone in a household has a fever or persistent cough, everyone there should stay at home for 14 days.

Johnson also said the government would no longer give emergency-services support to large gatherings, though he did not ban them outright. And unlike

schools in most other European countries, those in Britain remain open.

"We think that, on balance, best to keep schools open but appreciate that this is something we need to keep under review," Johnson said.

Britain lags behind countries such as Italy, Germany and France in the number of infections, and the government's scientific advisers have said that implementing draconian measures too early will make them harder to sustain as the out-

break peaks in two or three months.

Until Monday, Britons had been told merely to wash their hands frequently and to stay at home for a week if they have a fever or continuous cough.

The U.K. strategy is based on the presumption that most people will eventually get the virus. Britain's goal is to slow the spread of the infection so the country's overstretched National Health Service is not overwhelmed, while protecting those most at risk of serious

illness — the elderly and people with serious health problems.

Britain's approach had come under increasing pressure as neighboring countries went into lockdowns and closed their borders in response to the new virus. Some scientists urged more severe restrictions to enforce "social distancing" and slow the spread of the virus.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, and most recover. The worldwide outbreak has sickened over 179,000 people and left more than 7,000 dead. Over 78,000 people have recovered, most of them in China.

The outbreak has already had a huge effect on everyday life in Britain. Ridership on trains and the London Underground is down by a fifth as some businesses ask staff to work from home. Universities are moving classes online and several of London's West End theaters have shut down, with more expected to follow.

Supermarkets have been stripped of staples including toilet paper, pasta and rice as shoppers ignore government appeals not to hoard supplies. □

5-year sentence for French priest who abused boy scouts

By NICOLAS VAUX-MONTAGNY

Associated Press

LYON, France (AP) — A French priest who acknowledged sexually abusing at least 75 boys over decades was sentenced Monday to five years in prison, in France's worst case of clergy abuse to reach trial.

The court in Lyon issued the verdict against 74-year-old Bernard Preynat behind closed doors because of the spreading coronavirus that has shuttered most activity in France.

Preynat's case forced the first serious reckoning with sex abuse within the Catholic Church in France. Preynat testified that multiple

cardinals and other senior church officials were aware of his misconduct dating back to the 1960s, but he wasn't removed from the priesthood until last year.

Victims of Preynat's abuse, primarily boy scouts, welcomed his conviction for sexually abusing minors. Preynat was a scout leader. "It's really a relief," said Pierre Emmanuel Germain-Thill, who testified that Preynat's abuse upturned his life. "Since he's someone of a certain age, it seems like a correct verdict to me. The victims want to turn the page."

Preynat could have faced up to 10 years in prison, and the prosecution had asked



Former French priest Bernard Preynat, center, arrives at the Lyon court house, central France, Monday Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

for at least eight years. It wasn't immediately clear whether either side would appeal.

Preynat was present for the verdict, but didn't speak to any victims.

"He reacted as a man who

has recognized his guilt," his lawyer Frederic Doyer told reporters outside the courthouse.

During the trial, Preynat said he became interested in young boys when he was 14 or 15, and he discussed it with his bishop of the time, but was still later ordained as a priest.

Preynat testified that while working as their scout chaplain, he abused up to two boys "almost every weekend" from 1970 to 1990 and as many as four or five a week when he led one-week scout camps. He said that successive Lyon cardinals told him to stop, but didn't report him to police. □

Worker at Japan care home sentenced to hang for mass killing

TOKYO (AP) — A Japanese court on Monday sentenced a former care home employee to hang for knifing to death 19 disabled people and injuring two dozen others in the deadliest mass attack in post World War II Japan. The Yokohama District Court convicted Satoshi Uematsu of the killings and of injuring 24 other residents and two caregivers at the Yamayuri-en residential center in July 2016.

During the investigation and trial, Uematsu repeatedly said he had no regrets and was trying to help the world by killing people he thought were burdens. Advocacy groups said the suspect's views reflected a persistent prejudice in Japan against people with disabilities.

The trial focused on his mental state at the time of the crime. Chief Judge Kiyoshi Aonuma dismissed defense requests to acquit him because he was mentally incompetent due to a marijuana overdose.

"The attacks were premeditated, and the defendant was acting consistently to achieve his goal," Aonuma said, according to NHK public television.

"The crime, which took the lives of 19 people, was extremely heinous and caused damage that is incomparable to any other case," he was quoted by Kyodo News as saying. Uematsu, his long hair tied



In this July 26, 2016, file photo, journalists gather in front of Tsukui Yamayuri-en, a facility for the handicapped where a former care home employee killed disabled people, in Sagami-hara, outside Tokyo.

Associated Press

in a pony tail and wearing a dark suit, listened as the judge delivered the ruling, according to drawings by an artist in the courtroom. After the judge declared an end to the session, Uematsu raised his hand seeking permission to speak, but was not allowed to do so. Prosecutors said Uematsu's motive came from his biases and work experience at the home and not from use of marijuana. They said Ue-

matsu was mentally competent and should take responsibility for his actions. The killings mirrored a plot described in a letter that Uematsu had tried to give to a parliamentary leader months prior to the attack. He quit his job at the Yamayuri-en facility after being confronted about the letter and was committed to psychiatric care, but was released within two weeks, officials have said.

Uematsu, 30, told medical staff and officials that he was influenced by the ideas of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler, whose killings of disabled people were seen as intended to improve the perceived master race. Kazuya Ono, whose son Takashi was wounded but survived, said he still doesn't understand why the killings occurred.

"I stared at him throughout the trial to see if he showed

any feelings of apology or regret, but I couldn't see any of that," he told reporters after the ruling. "The trial ended without any convincing explanations of why the killings had to happen."

Shinichiro Kumagaya, a pediatrician at the University of Tokyo who has cerebral palsy, said the case underscores the prejudice against disabled people that persists in Japan. "In order to eliminate violence against disabled people, it is important for the entire society to share in supporting people with severe disabilities," Kumagaya said in an interview with NHK. "But in our society, the responsibility is entirely pushed onto their families and care homes, and I think this attitude is the root cause of such violence."

Japan maintains the death penalty despite growing international criticism. A government survey showed an overwhelming majority of the public supports executions. Japan and the U.S. are the only two countries in the Group of Seven industrialized nations that retain capital punishment. Executions are carried out in high secrecy in Japan, where prisoners are not informed of their fate until the morning they are hanged. Since 2007, Japan has begun releasing the names of those executed and some details of their crimes, but disclosures are still limited. □

4 rebels killed in clash in Indonesia's Papua region

TIMIKA, Indonesia (AP) — Four Papuan independence fighters were killed in an ongoing clash between security forces and a rebel group near the world's largest gold mine in Indonesia's easternmost Papua region, police and rebels said Monday.

The clashes, which began Feb. 29 near the Grasberg copper and gold mine in Papua province, earlier killed two security personnel and injured three others. Police said the attackers are believed to

be members of the West Papua Liberation Army, the military wing of the Free Papua Organization. Rebels in Papua have been fighting a low-level insurgency since the early 1960s, when Indonesia annexed the region, a former Dutch colony. Papua was formally incorporated into Indonesia in 1969 after a U.N.-sponsored ballot that was seen as a sham by many.

Papua police spokesman Ahmad Musthofa Kamal said a joint military and po-

lice force killed four of the Papuan fighters, including a woman, in a battle with dozens of rebels armed with military-grade weapons as well as axes and arrows in Kali Bua village in Mimika district near the mining town of Tembagapura.

Kamal said security forces seized three assault rifles, five arrows and an axe during the clash. He said the rifles were identified as police weapons that had been stolen by rebels when they attacked police posts in 2012 and 2014.

Sebby Sambom, a spokesman for the liberation army, confirmed the police claim, adding that two other fighters were injured in the battle.

Attacks by rebels near the Grasberg mine have spiked in the past year.

The mine, which is nearly half owned by U.S.-based Freeport-McMoRan and is run by PT Freeport Indonesia, is seen by separatists as a symbol of Indonesian rule and has been a frequent target for rebels.

The current shootout

caused about 2,000 villagers to flee for safety to neighboring Timika city.

The Grasberg mine's vast gold and copper reserves have been exploited for decades by Freeport-McMoRan, damaging the surrounding environment while providing significant tax income for the Indonesian government.

But indigenous Papuans have benefited little and are poorer, sicker and more likely to die young than people elsewhere in Indonesia. □

A year after deadly cyclone, Mozambique now braces for virus

By ANDREW MELDRUM

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — A year after hundreds of people were killed by one of the southern hemisphere's worst cyclones, Mozambique's port city of Beira is rebounding, but more than a million people need food aid there and in the surrounding countryside.

"A year ago much of Beira was flooded by Cyclone Idai. Buildings were inundated, homes collapsed or were washed away," said Daniel Timme of UNICEF, who was in the southern African city at the time. "People were desperately seeking family members and hunting for safe shelter and food."

Back in Beira now, he marveled at the progress made in the city, Mozambique's fourth largest, as residents repaired buildings and roads have been rebuilt. Seasonal rains have returned, but flood canals are channeling the waters away and the city center is bustling.

"There is a buzz of activity in Beira's port and marketplaces now," Timme said in a phone interview. "There's a great spirit of resilience here, although significant problems remain."



In this photo supplied by United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and taken Friday, Feb. 28 2020, children and a teacher walk past a United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) health centre in the Mandruzi resettlement neighbourhood, in Beira, Mozambique.

Associated Press

Poverty and hunger are at high levels in Mozambique, one of the world's poorest countries.

"Under the surface, and on the fringes of the city, there are widespread shortages of food. We are finding that the levels of severe acute malnutrition are still high, especially among children," Timme said.

Low-lying Mozambique, with a population of 30 million and a thousand-mile coastline on the Indian

Ocean, is especially prone to climate change disasters, he said.

"The country is experiencing more extreme weather events, such as two major cyclones last year in central and northern Mozambique, while the country's south had a drought," Timme said. Cyclone Kenneth roared in just six weeks after Idai, surprising a region of northern Mozambique rarely struck by cyclones.

"The food situation is bad.

This year's harvest is expected to be poor. Already we see cases of severe malnutrition and we are distributing nutrition supplements, such as peanut butter paste," Timme said.

Now another health challenge looms large: the new coronavirus.

So far Mozambique has not recorded a case of COVID-19 but the disease is spreading across Africa. Neighboring South Africa on Sunday declared a na-

tional disaster after dozens of confirmed cases.

Mozambican health officials are increasing surveillance and working to improve hospitals.

But the high levels of malnutrition make many Mozambicans especially vulnerable. An estimated 1.6 million people don't have enough to eat, according to UNICEF. More than 3,000 children under 5 have been diagnosed with life-threatening severe acute malnutrition in Beira and the surrounding plains of central Mozambique, Timme said.

The extreme weather disasters have left Mozambique, as well as neighboring Zimbabwe and Malawi, without adequate housing for thousands of families, according to Amnesty International. It called on the international community and the Mozambican government to "step up reconstruction ... in a way that truly delivers human rights."

"One year after the cyclone hit Beira, the reconstruction is taking place, but it's growing very slowly and people are rebuilding, they've put a tin roof on their home and they are trying to replant," said Deborah Nguyen of the World Food Program. □

Lebanon military court orders Lebanese-American be released

By BASSEM MROUE

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — A military tribunal in Beirut on Monday ordered the release of a Lebanese-American held in the country for nearly six months on charges of working for an Israeli-backed militia two decades ago, Lebanon's state-run news agency said.

Amer Fakhoury was ordered released because more than 10 years had passed since he allegedly tortured prisoners at a jail run by the so-called South Lebanon Army, the National News Agency said.

Fakhoury, 57, is a former SLA member who became a U.S. citizen last year, and is now a restaurant owner in Dover, New Hampshire. His case has been closely fol-

lowed in his home state of New Hampshire, where U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen and other officials have called for imposing sanctions on Lebanon to pressure Beirut to release him.

Fakhoury has not been attending questioning sessions in Lebanon over the past few months, after being hospitalized with stage 4 lymphoma.

It was not immediately clear if he will be set free, as he's facing another case filed by former prisoners who say they were tortured by him.

Fakhoury has been jailed since Sept. 12 after returning to Lebanon on vacation to visit family. Lebanon's intelligence service said he confessed during questioning to being a war-



In this Aug. 16, 2006 file photo, a Lebanese flag flies over Kham prison, in the southern town of Kham, Lebanon.

Associated Press

den at Kham Prison, which was run by the SLA during Israel's 18-year occupation of southern Lebanon. Human rights groups have described the prison as a center for torture.

Fakhoury's family and lawyer, however, say he had no direct contact with inmates and was never involved in any interrogation or torture.

Lebanon and Israel have

been officially at war since Israel's creation in 1948. Lebanon bans its citizens from traveling to Israel or having contact with Israelis. His lawyer and family say he fled Lebanon in 2001 through Israel and eventually to the United States because of death threats he and many other SLA members received after Israel ended its occupation of Lebanon in 2000.

In February, Fakhoury was charged by a military investigative judge with the murder and torture of inmates at Kham Prison. Hundreds of former Lebanese members of the SLA militia had fled to Israel, fearing reprisals if they remained in Lebanon. Others stayed and faced trial, receiving lenient sentences. □

Mexico: AMLO shakes, hugs, cheek-kisses despite virus advice

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Health authorities are imploring Mexicans to change lifestyles and deeply ingrained customs to slow the spread of the new coronavirus: Avoid physical greetings, keep your distance from others, avoid nonessential activities, among others. The message doesn't seem to have sunk in with President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who isn't practicing what his own officials are preaching.

Touring the Mexican countryside this weekend, López Obrador gave a series of campaign-style speeches to crowds of townspeople touting his administration and barely mentioning the pandemic, saying Sunday that he has "great faith that we are going to advance our beloved Mexico, no misfortune will hurt us, pandemics, none of that."

It's how he spends most weekends, and a milieu in which he often seems most at home: Getting out of the crowded capital and pressing the flesh among poor, rural Mexicans who make up a core part of his base. This weekend though, his usual way of engaging locals was notable



A spectator wearing a face mask with a painted skull attends a show during the Vive Latino music festival in Mexico City, Sunday, March 15, 2020.

Associated Press

for contravening what his government's coronavirus response team is calling best practices.

On Saturday he waded through a crowd of fans jostling each other to get selfies with him outside a hotel, giving out hugs and even cradling and kissing a young girl on the cheek. Later in the day he stopped his car to listen to a young

man discuss the properties of water from the chicayota fruit as villagers crowded around. López Obrador sampled the beverage and closed the encounter with a hearty handshake.

Hours later, back in Mexico City, Health Department Deputy Secretary Hugo López-Gatell gave his daily evening news conference, soberly updating the coun-

try on the number of confirmed coronavirus cases — 41, up from 26 the previous day and 11 the day before that — and warning that the situation in Mexico is expected to get more serious soon.

"We have already said, it is highly recommendable starting today that we avoid greeting with handshakes, kisses, hugs. ... Let

us greet each other in a way that we do not need to be inside the healthy distance," López-Gatell said.

A video featured on the Department's coronavirus website shows Zacatecas state officials demonstrating alternative greetings: bowing, saluting, waving, elbow-bumping, even throwing up rock 'n' roll hand gestures. Meanwhile officials have also begun calling off some mass events, while allowing others to continue as normal for now.

The global pandemic has infected more than 156,000 people and killed more than 5,800 as of Sunday. The disease for most people causes only mild or moderate symptoms but for some, especially the elderly or people with underlying health conditions, it can cause more severe illness. Nearly 74,000 people have recovered from it so far, mostly in China.

On Sunday López Obrador was again speaking to crowds and greeting supporters in the Costa Chica region of Guerrero state, tweeting that people there were "enthusiastic, excited and happy." □

Puerto Rico cracks down on violators of coronavirus curfew

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Sirens blared across Puerto Rico's busiest beaches on Monday as police cleared hundreds of tourists from the U.S. territory's coast in a crackdown on people violating a newly imposed curfew aimed at curbing the new coronavirus.

Using loudspeakers, police in patrol cars ordered people off the beach: "Please stay at home. Governor's executive orders. The beach is closed."

The sweep surprised many tourists in the capital of San Juan, some of whom disregarded orders to stay inside their hotels on a sunny day. "Why would I get sick at the beach? I'm not going to be touching anything," said 46-year-old David Zimmer of Richmond, Minnesota, as he joined a group of family and friends flip-flopping

their way to a beach that police had driven through just an hour ago to empty it out.

Other tourists heeded the warnings and shuffled back to their hotels, many carrying take-out meals before locking themselves in.

Puerto Rico Secretary of State Elmer Román said at a press conference on Monday that no one is allowed to go to the beach, clarifying an executive order issued Sunday that has confused many.

"Unfortunately, tourists have to stay in their rooms," he said.

Román earlier told local residents, "You will stay in your house unless you are going to buy food or medicine," he said. "People have to understand this is something serious."

Puerto Rico had recorded

only five confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of Monday, and no deaths.

The new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, for most people, though it can cause more severe illness for older adults and people with existing health problems.

The World Health Organization says people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

Elsewhere across Puerto Rico, authorities said Monday they had fined more than two dozen businesses and arrested a bar owner for violating the curfew, and they warned that violators would be pursued more aggressively in up-

coming days.

Officials also announced that the National Guard will start screening passengers arriving at Puerto Rico's main airport and that the government will hold all meetings and press conferences online only.

Some private sector employees complained their bosses were ordering them to go to work despite the curfew, prompting the government to urge all non-essential workers to stay at home.

Román warned that police will issue fines to individuals, not just businesses accused of violating the order. Officers have started 12-hour shifts to ensure people comply with the curfew, with violators facing a six-month jail term or a fine of up to \$5,000. On Sunday, Gov. Wanda Vázquez ordered

a two-week closure of non-essential government offices and commercial businesses except for gas stations and those in the food, health and finance sectors. Puerto Rico also cancelled major events, including an Ironman race scheduled for this past weekend.

Tizgel High, a 41-year-old athlete from Nashville, Tennessee who was supposed to compete in the Ironman competition, resigned herself on Monday to run around a track near the beach. She had received an alert via her cellphone on Sunday that people were banned from being outside from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., but she had not heard that they could not be outside during the day. "Not being on the beach doesn't make much sense to me," she said. □

LOCAL



Aruba its Green Tuesday and Blue Wednesday



ORANJESTAD/PALM BEACH – Today is St. Patrick's Day. The color that represents this day is green. Wednesday is a national holiday and the Day of the National Anthem and Flag, in Papiamentu Dia di Himno y Bandera. This day is marked by the blue color we find in the national flag.

St. Patrick's Day

St Patrick's Day, on March 17, remembers one of Ireland's patron saints, St Patrick. It largely celebrates Irish-American culture in the United States. This day is the traditional death date of Saint Patrick (c. AD 385–461), and although he was not born Irish, he has become an important part of the Irish heritage, mostly through his service across Ireland in the 5th century. Many stories are told in connection with St. Patrick.

The three-leaf clover was said to be used by the saintly bishop to explain the Trinity to the pagans, which is why it is such a common St. Patrick's Day symbol today. Another legend has Patrick driving all the snakes out of Ireland; snakes were a popular symbol among the Irish pagans. He is certainly one of the most revered saints in the Catholic Church.

Day of the National Anthem and Flag

Probably the most popular national holiday on Aruba is the day of the national anthem and flag, Dia di Himno y Bandera. A strong sense of pride is displayed all over as Arubans celebrate their Flag and Anthem Day. Due to the current circumstances with regards to the COVID-19 virus, celebrations are cancelled. However, we do honor our National Anthem and Flag on this day. The Flag of Aruba was officially adopted on March 18th 1976, along with the official anthem "Aruba Dushi Tera" composed by Padu



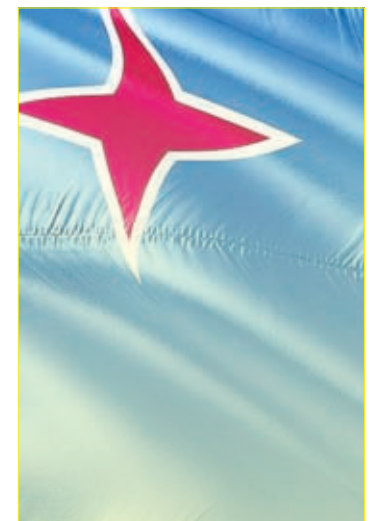
del Caribe, Hubert Booi and Rufo Wever. March 18th was also chosen for the celebration of the national anthem and flag of Aruba because during the round table conference in the Netherlands, on that date in 1948, for the first time a motion was presented to her Majesty Queen Juliana, which called for the self-determination of the Aruban people. □



We are proud of our Columnist



Anthony Croes, writer of our weekly column of Island Insight and owner/founder of Etnia Nativa, was the first person to raise the flag of Aruba for the first time in 1976.



Appreciated client/reader,

In conjunction with the national holiday Himno y Bandera (Day of the National Anthem & Flag), Aruba Today will not be published on Wednesday, March 18th, 2020. We will resume our regular printing schedule on Thursday, March, 19th, 2020.



Article by Etnia Nativa
 WhatsApp us 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience!
 Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



Maish grandi; Big corn or Zea mays

Episode LX - (60)

ORANJESTAD — Corn as we know it today would not exist if it weren't for the Amerindian botanists or expert agro engineers that cultivated and developed many crops including corn. It is a human creation, a plant that does not exist naturally in the wild and will not survive without human attention, it can only survive if planted and protected by humans.



1-Corn is an Amerindian heritage

The greatest surprise, and the source of much past controversy in corn archeology, was the identification of the corn's ancestor. Many botanists did not see any connection between corn and other living plants. Some concluded that the crop plant arose through the domestication by early agriculturalists of wild corn that was now extinct, or at least undiscovered.

About 10,000 years ago, Mesoamerican man found that he could make hybrids with a conical grass, made up of various grains, and that was born in the wild: teosinte (which in Nahuatl means grain of God). Since then, he began to grow this seed, choosing the best grains and generating hybrids, so corn was born.

The oldest vestiges of domesticated corn were found in Mexico and are 8,700 B.C.

The teosinte currently continues to live in Mexico wild along streams and slopes. There are many types; maize is believed to come from the Zea. mays ssp type. Parviglumis that grows in the southwest of the country and is the most similar, in genetic structure, to corn.

The most impressive aspect of the maize story is what it tells us about the capabilities of agriculturalists 9,000 years ago. These people were living in small groups and shifting their settlements seasonally. Yet they were able to transform a grass with many inconvenient, unwanted features into a high-yielding, easily harvested food crop. The domestication process must have occurred in many stages over a considerable length of time as many different, independent characteristics of the plant were modified.

From Mexico maize spread north into the Southwestern United States and south down the coast to Peru and Argentina. About 1000 years ago, as Native American people migrated north to the eastern woodlands of present day North America, they brought corn with them.



2-There are many different types of corn



3- "Maishi" Abstract Art

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Maish grandi; Big corn or Zea mays

Episode LX - (60)

Continued from Page 14

When Europeans like Columbus made contact with people were living in the Caribbean, North and South America, corn was a major part of the diet of most native people. When Columbus "discovered" America, he also discovered corn. But up to this time, people living in Europe did not know about corn. The first Thanksgiving was held in 1621. While sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie were not on the menu, however Indian corn certainly would have been.

For Aruba corn was of vital importance and the most important crop followed by yuca, beans squashes and peanuts. Corn was sacred for the Caquetio and respected the whole plant as their creator as the mother food and venerated with the out most respect.

Beside pollen and ceramic buren`s, ancient agro ceramic cultures of Aruba had left their native milling stones or Metate's and also known as cudie`s, testimony of the presence of maize. This abundance of food gave time to master many



4-Art work belonging to a private collector- Title "What grandma left behind"

arts of ceramics expressions and an enormous array of crafts and technics.

The cultivation of corn brought a

whole new era and progress to Amerindian societies all over the continent. Yes, to those who cultivated corn successfully, including those on islands and mountains

side. All These Amerindians group claims that their flesh and bones are made out of Corn, of Maish or Zea mays. That is how important this wonder plant is for them. □

Aruba to Me

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Roger and Jacqueline Meyer from Amstelveen, Netherlands. They wrote:

Aruba to us is..... "Looking forward all year in meeting up with old friends!"

This picture was taken at the Kini Kini Poolbar of La Quinta Beach Resort.



Larry and Jutta Weaver

Aruba to us is..... The best for family togetherness.

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Picture from **Otto Hall**. He took this photo near Baby Beach.

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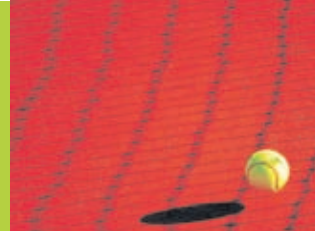
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SPORTS



Iditarod loses another major sponsor

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — One of the Iditarod's top sponsors is dropping financial support, the second major sponsor with Alaska ties to sever relationships with the sled dog race this month.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles confirmed Monday that the Anchorage Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram dealership will no longer sponsor the race. The dealership for 30 years has been one of the Iditarod's principal partners and annually presents the race winner with a new pickup at the finish line in Nome.

A statement from Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, or FCA, noted the parent company did not sponsor the Iditarod.

"Anchorage Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Center — an independently owned and operated dealership — had been a sponsor of the race. We understand and can confirm the dealership will no longer continue sponsoring the race. As such, FCA and the Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram logos will no longer be associated with the race," the statement said. Chuck Talks, a spokesman for the Anchorage dealership, initially said it planned to sponsor the race again next year, finances permitting.

Later, when informed of Chrysler's statement, he said, "That's kind of news to us. As a franchisee, we are subject to various controls."

Continued on next page

TAG, YOU'RE IT!



New York Giants franchise defensive lineman Leonard Williams

In this Dec. 9, 2019, file photo, New York Giants defensive end Leonard Williams reacts during an NFL football game against the Philadelphia Eagles in Philadelphia. The Giants have placed a non-exclusive franchise tag on defensive tackle Leonard Williams. The Giants announced the move Monday, March 16, 2020.

NASCAR suspends season until May but will reschedule events

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — NASCAR has suspended its season until May as part of the CDC's recommendation to postpone gatherings for the next eight weeks because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision came after at least two Monday conference calls between the sanctioning body and its team owners. It affects seven total races — Atlanta and Homestead had already been postponed.

"The health and safety of our fans, industry and the communities in which we race is our most important priority," NASCAR said.

The series plans to return to the track at Martinsville Speedway in Virginia on May 9.

"We intend to hold all 36 races this season, with future rescheduling soon to be determined as we continue to monitor this situation closely with public health officials and medical experts," NASCAR said. "What is important now transcends the world of sports and our focus is on everyone's safety and well-being as we navigate this challenging time together." NASCAR first said it would run last weekend and this coming weekend without spectators, but reversed course Friday and postponed the races at Atlan-



In this Nov. 18, 2018, file photo, Denny Hamlin, left, leads the pack at the start of the NASCAR Cup Series championship auto race at Homestead-Miami Speedway, in Homestead, Fla.

Associated Press

ta Motor Speedway and Homestead-Miami Speedway.

NASCAR had not addressed anything beyond Homestead until Monday's announcement.

IndyCar and Formula One both canceled last weekend's season-opening races, IndyCar has suspended the season through the end of April and F1 said upcoming races in Bahrain, Vietnam and China are postponed.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and

cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. The vast majority of people recover from the new virus within a few weeks.

Indianapolis Motor Speedway early Monday issued a statement acknowledging the CDC guideline against gatherings, is planning for all contingencies, but also is prepared to run its events in May. The Indy 500, scheduled for May 24, typically draws more than 300,000 fans.

The speedway — and now the season — are scheduled to open the first week of May. Roger Penske, the new owner of IndyCar and the speedway, hopes to open the speedway a few days before the May 9 race on the road course to build in test days. Penske wants teams as prepared as possible for the Indianapolis 500.

"Our priority is to do our part in protecting the public health while still conducting the 104th Indianapolis 500," the speedway said. "This continues to be a dynamic situation which we

are monitoring constantly in coordination with federal, state, local and public health officials. We are planning for all contingencies and will be prepared to run the GMR Grand Prix and Indy 500 as the COVID-19 situation permits."

IndyCar's 17-race schedule has been hit hard by the coronavirus because street races in St. Petersburg, Florida and Long Beach, California, have been canceled outright. Two road course events in Birmingham, Alabama, and Austin, Texas, could be rescheduled.

Nearly every racing series in the world has ceased competition since coronavirus became a global pandemic. IMSA moved the 12 Hours of Sebring scheduled for this weekend until November's season finale.

Organizers of the 24 Hours of Le Mans said Monday a decision will be made in mid-April about its June race.

Supercross ran its first 10 races but the 2020 season has been postponed until further notice. The series has canceled five races — at Indianapolis, Detroit, Seattle, Denver and Foxboro. No makeup dates were announced for the April 25 event at Las Vegas and the May 2 race at Salt Lake City. □

Continued from previous page

"We will address 2021 sponsorships after the conclusion of the race," Iditarod CEO Rob Urbach said in an email. "Our mission is solely focused on executing a safe and healthy race, and look forward to welcoming race teams to Nome."

The announcement came as mushers are making the final push for Nome in this year's race. The nearly 1,000-mile (1,609-kilometer) race started March 8 in Willow with 57 mushers. Six have withdrawn.

Thomas Waerner of Norway was leading the race. He was the first musher to arrive in Koyuk, about 150 miles (241 kilometers) from the finish line. He rested in the checkpoint for four hours and left just as the



Thomas Waerner mushes into Unalakleet, Alaska, Sunday, March 15, 2020 during the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

Associated Press

second place musher, Jessie Royer of Fairbanks, was arriving Monday afternoon. Alaska Airlines, the Seattle-based airline that got its start decades ago in Alaska, earlier this month an-

nounced it was dropping its sponsorship of the race, which has been targeted by an animal rights group. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals was first to announce the departure

of both Alaska Airlines and Chrysler as race sponsors. The group says the nearly 1,000-mile race across Alaska is cruel for the dogs.

It also claims more than 150 dogs have died since the race started in 1973. Iditarod officials dispute that number but have not provided their own count despite numerous requests by The Associated Press.

PETA is the race's biggest critic and has for years targeted sponsors. In Chrysler's case, that includes more than a quarter-million emails from PETA supporters, television ads in the Detroit area and protesters dragging a sled filled with fake dead dogs around downtown Detroit, the organization said in a statement.

"After feeling some real pressure from PETA, Chrysler put the brakes on its connection with the Iditarod and is sending the message that dogs deserve better than being run to death for mushers' prize money," PETA Executive Vice President Tracy Reiman said in a statement. "Alaska Airlines has also withdrawn its sponsorship of this wretched race in which over 150 dogs have died, and we hope this year is the last year dogs will suffer in this way."

Alaska Airlines denied PETA had anything to do with its decision to drop sponsorship of the race after more than 40 years and instead said it was a change in the company's corporate giving strategy. □



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MLB delays opening day to mid-May at earliest due to virus

By RONALD BLUM

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball pushed back opening day until mid-May at the earliest on Monday because of the new coronavirus after the federal government recommended restricting events of more than 50 people for the next eight weeks.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred made the announcement following a conference call with executives of the 30 teams.

"The clubs remain committed to playing as many games as possible when the season begins," the commissioner's office said in a statement.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended Sunday that gatherings of 50 people or more be canceled or postponed across the country for the next eight weeks.

"The opening of the 2020 regular season will be pushed back in accordance with that guidance," Manfred said.

No telling at this point when games will start. The All-Star Game at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles on July 14 could be in jeopardy.

"We're not going to announce an alternate opening day at this point. We're going to have to see how things develop," Manfred told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch at Cardinals camp in Jupiter, Florida. He didn't want to speculate about the possibility of playing in empty stadiums, saying part of that decision would depend on timing.

MLB called off the rest of the spring training schedule on Thursday and said opening day, which had been scheduled for March 26, was postponed for at least two weeks. Teams and players agree that two

to four weeks of additional spring training will be needed before the regular season begins.

"I'm just treating this as January of the winter time," Arizona catcher Stephen Vogt said in a text to The Associated Press. "I am working out with the anticipation of baseball activities ramping up over the next month. But my mentality is back to preparing for the season."

Under an agreement last week, between MLB and the players' association, players are allowed to decide whether to stay at spring training or go home, but some teams have ignored that deal and told players to leave.

"There should be no organized activities in the camps," Manfred told the Post-Dispatch. "We did agree with the MLBPA that spring training sites would remain open, but the thought there is with a skeleton crew, really to give players some place to use a gym, as opposed to being forced out into a public gym and the like. And we're really encouraging players to make a decision as to where they want to be over an extended period of time and get to that location as soon as possible."

The players' association sent an email to agents on Monday saying that for players who went home or to their team's regular-season city it would pay \$1,100 allowances through April 9 to players on 40-man rosters as of March 13. That amount also would go to players with minor league contracts at big league spring training who were on 40-man rosters at the end of last season.

The union is negotiating with MLB over resetting the



An empty practice field is seen at the Miami Marlins spring training baseball facility, Monday, March 16, 2020, in Jupiter, Fla.

Associated Press

dates for players with opt-out clauses in their deals, and the sides are likely to agree on a roster freeze. They are discussing the possibility of payments to major league players who have not reached the point of big-money deals to make up for paychecks they won't be getting in April and May.

This year marked the earliest opening day other than for international games. As it stood, Game 7 of the World Series would have been Oct. 28, and teams and players could push the postseason into November. Any change to the 162-game schedule would necessitate bargaining over an array of issues, including when and how much players get paid and how much major league service they are credited for. Service time determines eligibility for free agency and salary arbitration.

Clubs also were told to call

MLB if they wanted assistance with credit lines, a person familiar with Manfred's call said, speaking on condition of anonymity because that detail was not announced.

MLB had not had a mass postponement of openers since 1995, when the season was shortened from 162 games to 144 following a 7 1/2-month players' strike that also wiped out the 1994 World Series. Opening day was pushed back from April 2 to April 26 and player salaries were reduced by 11.1% because the games were lost due to a strike. After a 32-day spring training lockout in 1990 caused opening day to be delayed a week until April 9, the season was extended by three days to allow each team a full 162-game schedule. Baseball's first strike lasted from April 1-13 in 1972, and the season started April 15. Teams played 153-156 games.

The 1918 season was cut short because of World War I. Provost Marshal Gen. Enoch Crowder announced a regulation on May 23 that men not involved in useful occupations appear before the draft board. The War Department initially did not rule baseball was non-essential under the "work or fight" order but Secretary of War Newton D. Baker announced on July 26 that baseball had to comply by Sept. 1. After some negotiation, the regular season ended Sept. 2 with teams playing 123-131 games, and the Boston Red Sox beat the Chicago Cubs in a World Series played from Sept. 5-11.

Also Monday, MLB and the union announced a joint donation of \$1 million to Feeding America and Meals on Wheels America, aimed at fighting hunger resulted from school closures and quarantines. □

NFL bars players and team personnel travel in free agency

By **BARRY WILNER**
AP Pro Football Writer

The NFL has barred in-person interviews with free agents and is requiring local physical examinations for them rather than team-conducted exams.

In a memo sent to the 32 franchises on Monday, the league also banned travel by team personnel to meet with free agents as well as those players traveling to team facilities. The league's business year begins Wednesday, and the period in which players' representatives could negotiate with clubs began Monday — though no deals could be finalized.

All offseason activities such as meetings, practices and minicamps, have been delayed indefinitely as a safeguard against the new coronavirus. No players can enter a club facility through March 31, with the exception of those receiving medical treatment.

The restrictions were first reported by ESPN.

Earlier, things just got hotter on offense in the desert.

The first day that players' representatives could talk with teams wound up being more about trades than free agents — with one of the NFL's biggest stars, DeAndre Hopkins, headed to Arizona.

In a stunner that overshadowed several other trades and a slew of offers to unrestricted free agents, the Texans sent their three-time All-Pro receiver to the Cardinals for running back David Johnson, a second-round draft pick this year and a fourth-rounder in 2021.

Several Cardinals players not surprisingly reacted positively to the move on social media. Quarterback Kyler Murray, the NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year, responded with a "LET'S GET



In this Jan. 4, 2020, file photo, Houston Texans wide receiver DeAndre Hopkins celebrates with fans after an NFL wild-card playoff football game against the Buffalo Bills in Houston.

Associated Press

RIGHT! @DeAndreHopkins " while wideout Christian Kirk added " 10 + 11 + 13 = SCARY SIGHT. Welcome to the squad bro let's eat! "

The NFC champion 49ers got into the bartering, too. They dealt top defensive tackle DeForest Buckner to Indianapolis for the No. 13 pick in this year's draft, which, incidentally, won't have any public events next month in Las Vegas — if it is even held there as originally planned.

A person familiar with the deal said Buckner will receive a new contract worth \$21 million a year from the Colts. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal and contract can't be finalized until the start of the league year Wednesday.

The trade came just after San Francisco opted to keep another standout lineman, Arik Armstead,

who got a five-year deal worth \$85 million.

"I'm excited to continue my career with the 49ers, the organization that gave me a chance by drafting me five years ago," Armstead said. "They have given me the platform to give back to my community and play the game I love at the highest level, and I am just getting started."

The NFL's business year is just getting started, as planned, despite the spread of the new coronavirus. For now, all moves are being done remotely with basically a ban on travel within the league.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneu-

monia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

Also traded was Baltimore tight end Hayden Hurst to Atlanta, which is losing TE Austin Hooper to Cleveland in free agency. The Ravens received second and fifth-round picks in this year's draft, and the Falcons got a fourth-rounder.

Fourteen franchise tags were handed out, the most since 2012, with only one quarterback, the Cowboys' Dak Prescott. The other biggest names among those franchised were Titans running back Derrick Henry; Bengals receiver A.J. Green; Chiefs defensive tackle Chris Jones; and Buccaneers linebacker Shaq Barrett, the league leader in sacks in 2019. The move by Tampa Bay with Barrett almost assures that quarterback Jameis Winston is headed elsewhere. Franchise tag values range from \$26.824 million for a quarterback, to \$17.865

million for a running back to \$17.788 million for a defensive end/edge rusher; to \$5.019 million for kickers.

Running back Kenyan Drake got a transition tag from Arizona, but with Johnson traded to Houston, he has an open path to the starting job.

In case you're wondering, no word out of the Tom Brady camp on a potential landing spot for the six-time Super Bowl champion should he leave New England.

In other pending deals or moves:

—Free agent tackle Jack Conklin has agreed to a three-year, \$42 million contract with the Browns. A 2016 All-Pro as a rookie, he will get \$30 million guaranteed and earn \$20 million in his first year.

—Defensive end Shaq Lawson has agreed to a \$30 million, three-year contract with Miami. The contract could be worth up to \$36 million, and \$21 million will be guaranteed. Lawson spent his first four NFL seasons with the Bills and last year had a career-high 6 1/2 sacks, which would have led the Dolphins.

—Minnesota reached an agreement with punter Britton Colquitt on a three-year, \$9 million contract in which he will get \$5 million in guaranteed money.

—Washington agreed to re-sign inside linebacker Jon Bostic to a \$6.6 million, two-year deal. He was tied for second on the team with 105 tackles in 2019.

—Two veterans retired: Ben Watson and Ramon Foster. Watson, a 39-year-old Patriots tight end, is concluding a 15-year NFL career that included two stints in New England, as well as stops in Cleveland, New Orleans and Baltimore. Watson retires with 547 catches for 6,058 yards and 44 touchdowns. And a Super Bowl ring.

Foster, 34, is an 11-year veteran who made the Steelers as an undrafted rookie free agent out of Tennessee in 2009. He became a steady force on a unit that evolved into one of the league's best. □



NFL wins again with deal players didn't have to make

By **TIM DAHLBERG**
AP Sports Columnist

More money, more jobs, and more for retirement. Those are the kind of things negotiated in most union contracts, and the union that represents NFL players got them in the new deal that ties the NFL and its players together for the next decade.

But more work, too? Who would negotiate that?

That's what a lot of NFL players must be wondering after a vote to approve the new collective bargaining agreement barely squeaked past members. The vote released Sunday revealed a deep schism among players when it came to the centerpiece of the agreement — a 17th regular season game in exchange for owners throwing a few more financial crumbs their way.

There's no such schism among NFL owners. They're popping champagne corks after getting players to sign off on a deal that guarantees their golden goose remains golden for at least another 10 years.

What's not to like about getting more regular-season games — and more playoff games (though owners can impose that unilaterally) — for the upcoming television deals that will make their billion-dollar franchises even more valuable than before?

"We are pleased that the players have voted to ratify the proposed new CBA, which will provide substantial benefits to all current and retired players, increase jobs, ensure continued progress on player safety, and give our fans more and better football," Commissioner Roger Goodell said.

Not so pleased are some of the NFL's elite players, who already have big salaries and weren't looking for more work. They'll be risking their bodies at least one more Sunday a year when the league goes to an ex-

panded schedule as soon as the 2021 season.

"It seems like player safety has a price tag," 49ers cornerback Richard Sherman said at the Super Bowl. "You know, player safety up to the point of, hey, 17 games makes us this much money. So they really don't care how safe we are."

Not safer than before, that's for sure. A 17th game not only increases the chance of injury to players but adds wear and tear to bodies that struggle to make it through the season intact as it is.

Yes, players do get fewer practices in pads and one less exhibition game as part of the trade off. There are more jobs — and more money — for those who stay healthy and productive.

And retirees make out better, too, with larger pensions and more players included in the pension pool. That's all well and good for a union that struggles to get the same kind of deals that baseball and basketball players take for granted. The NFLPA always seems to be playing catch-up when it goes against hard-line owners who have beaten the union down before and would not be averse to doing it again.

But this was a deal that didn't need to be made, at least right now. There's still another year left on the current pact, and plenty of time to twist the arms of owners — even with the implicit warning from on top that this was the best they could do.

And to make it for 10 years? Didn't players learn anything from the current contract that began when some players were still in middle school?

That means at least another decade without guaranteed deals for most players. Another decade with cheap rookie deals that for many will be the only contract they ever get.

It's enough to make Dal-



In this Oct. 13, 2019, file photo, Los Angeles Chargers tight end Hunter Henry, right, catches a pass while under pressure from Pittsburgh Steelers inside linebacker Vince Williams during the second half of an NFL football game, in Carson, Calif.

Associated Press

las Cowboys owner Jerry Jones gas up his new yacht and party like no one had ever heard of the coronavirus.

"Can't believe we agreed to that lol," Colts tight end Eric Ebron tweeted. "We can only play this game for so long and y'all didn't want everything we could get out of it? ... 2030 y'all do better."

Players didn't agree to it by much. The final vote was a razor-thin 1,019-959 for approving the deal, and some 500 eligible players didn't even bother to vote. Hardly an overwhelming mandate. But for many players the promise of more money was too much

to resist. Indeed, owners knew what they were doing when they dangled just enough sweeteners in front of players, knowing many are more concerned with what they might make today than what will happen to them over the next 10 years.

Then again, with a pandemic ravaging the world, maybe they figured that even if new contracts aren't guaranteed, nothing else in life is either.

"I think the coronavirus probably got into some peoples' minds, definitely," Denver cornerback Chris Harris Jr. said. "I had already voted, but I wouldn't have changed my mind.

I can see, though, how it could have caused some guys to change from a no to a yes (for financial stability)."

The NFL will soon begin negotiating new TV and digital deals, and more billions to add to league coffers. Players will get a percentage of that, so they've got incentive to make a deal for the common good.

The other incentive is that the average NFL career lasts only a few years, so they might as well grab everything they can right now. Players are doing just that in a deal they rushed into making.

And the NFL owners win once again. □

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Crews cover the ice at American Airlines Center in Dallas, home of the Dallas Stars hockey team, after the NHL season was put on hold due to coronavirus, Thursday, March 12, 2020.

Associated Press

NHL pushes back timeline on potential resumption of season

By **STEPHEN WHYNO and JOHN WAWROW**
AP Hockey Writers

The NHL is pushing back the possibility of resuming its season for several weeks, if not a month or more.

The league and NHL Players' Association told players Monday they can go home — even out of North America — and must self-isolate through March 27 while the season is on hold amid the coronavirus pandemic. But the NHL also cautioned that it will not be able to even provide guidance on the potential reopening of team practices for another 45 days, which could make May the earliest possible restart date.

The new directives come on the heels of the CDC's recommendation against gatherings of 50 or more people in the U.S. for the next eight weeks because of the coronavirus pandemic. Under the NHL's new timeline, it would mean facilities would not be opened until late April at the earliest.

"I think in light of the CDC recommendations, it's hard to foresee that we're looking at much happening here in March or even April, in my opinion," agent Jay Grossman said.

The league said "depend-

ing on world developments," consideration will be given to reopening practice facilities after the self-quarantine period ends in late March.

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver last week said his league's hiatus would likely last at least a month. After saying last week the season was on "pause," Commissioner Gary Bettman had not put a time frame on when the NHL could resume play.

"The pause will be until it's appropriate and prudent and safe to start back up," Bettman said last week.

"Nobody knows how long the hiatus may be. Nobody, even the medical community, can predict it with certainty.

And what we're doing is, we're modeling every conceivable alternative so that when it's appropriate to go back to work, we will know what our options and our alternatives are."

The U.S. government has imposed a travel ban from Europe for non-citizens that extends until mid-April. There are currently 233 European players on NHL rosters, including leading scorer Leon Draisaitl from Germany, and there are more on contracts who are in the minors. How many might

return home is unknown.

"I've spoken to some players who are doing their best to obviously scramble to return to the safest, most comfortable environment that they can get to at this point," Grossman said.

Players previously were directed to stay in their team's city and wait. The league and union had discussed the possibility of players returning to team training facilities within the next week or so, but that plan has similarly changed. Those facilities are currently closed to players.

"We'll be constantly in touch with the NHL and constantly re-evaluating," NHLPA executive director Don Fehr said last week. "Any date you pick out is merely going to be a best guess and it has about as much likelihood of being right as any other best guess."

Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly told The AP teams had been instructed to take care of arrangements for and pay players under contract.

That was in light of the minor league ECHL's decision to cancel the rest of its season.

The NHL suspended its season with 189 games remaining before the playoffs. □



In this April 5, 2018, file photo, Augusta National Golf Club Chairman Fred Ridley watches the honorary first tee shots before the first round at the Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Ga.

Associated Press

Report: Augusta National to close club by end of the week

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

Augusta National first postponed the Masters. Now the home of the Masters is closing its club.

Golf Digest obtained a letter from Chairman Fred Ridley to Augusta National members that says the club will close by the end of the week because of increasing concerns over the new coronavirus and how it might affect the staff.

The club would confirm only that a memo had been sent.

"Beginning today, we are taking the necessary steps to curtail our operations so, by the end of this week, the Club will be closed until further notice," Ridley said in the memo obtained by Golf Digest.

Ridley said the grounds would be maintained with limited personnel and said other duties would be handled remotely. He said he would review the situation and send timely updates, and he thanked the members for "patience and trust as we plan for the realities of this pandemic."

The Masters was scheduled for April 9-12. This will be the first time since 1946 — when the Masters resumed after World War II — that golf's most viewed tournament is not the first full week in April. Augusta National closes about a month after the Masters for the summer and reopens in October.

Still to be determined is when it could be rescheduled, which is the club's plan. Ridley's letter comes one day after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that events of 50 or more people be shut down for eight weeks. That would last until the second full week in May.

Still up in the air is the second major of the year, the PGA Championship, scheduled for May 14-17 in San Francisco.

The PGA of America on Monday postponed its annual championship for club professionals that determines which 20 play in the PGA Championship — but that's assuming the major is held.

The PGA Professional Championship was scheduled for April 26-29 in Austin, Texas. If the PGA Championship is held, the leading 20 club pros from its player-of-the-year points standings in 2019 would be selected.

The PGA of America says it is staying in touch with officials from San Francisco and state leaders in California, evaluating plans and keeping health the highest priority.

San Francisco was among six Bay Area counties that were issued an order Monday for residents to stay inside and to venture outside only for necessities for the next three weeks. □

Networks get through first weekend with taped programming

By JOE REEDY
AP Sports Writer

Scott Van Pelt was supposed to be breaking down the NCAA Tournament bracket on a busy Sunday night on ESPN's "SportsCenter."

Instead, Van Pelt was figuring out how to fill most of the hour with the sports world on hold because of the spread of the coronavirus.

"I have no idea. Right now having a rundown is a bit pointless," Van Pelt said. "It's like changing recipes on the fly. Are we making cookies? No, making something entirely different. I don't know what else can be cancelled on our watch. It's been quite a week."

Van Pelt was supposed to be doing halftime segments during last Wednesday's NBA games. What ended up happening was Van Pelt updating viewers about the NBA season as well as providing interviews and analysis once the New Orleans Pelicans' game at the Sacramento Kings was postponed.

Van Pelt and ESPN weren't the only ones having to scramble to fill programming. CBS aired championship games from past Big Ten and Atlantic 10 tour-

naments on Saturday and Sunday. During the hour that CBS was supposed to be showing the tournament selections, viewers in New York saw the news while Los Angeles aired an infomercial.

NBC and Golf Channel showed the final two rounds of last year's Players Championship after the PGA Tour canceled the final three rounds Friday. Fox left it up to their affiliates to program the gap left by the cancellation of Sunday's NASCAR race in Atlanta and NBCSN re-aired last year's IndyCar season opener.

ESPN at least had some live programming on Saturday with a UFC card from Brazil. Sunday was mostly films from the "30 for 30" series while ESPN2 re-aired some of the top college basketball games from the season. On Saturday they showed the entire "Basketball: A Love Story" series.

ABC also showed "30 for 30" films as well as a couple episodes from the "College Football 150" series. FS1 and FS2 had a mix of college basketball and NFL re-aired. Whether that remains the template for future weekends remains to be seen.

Van Pelt said the early plan for Sunday's "SportsCenter" included analyzing players



Greensboro Coliseum is mostly empty after the NCAA college basketball games were cancelled at the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament in Greensboro, N.C., Thursday, March 12, 2020. The biggest conferences in college sports all canceled their basketball tournaments because of the new coronavirus, seemingly putting the NCAA Tournament in doubt

Associated Press

approving the NFL's collective bargaining agreement as well as any signings that took place. He was also planning to interview Penn State senior forward Lamar Stevens on seeing his season end abruptly when the Nittany Lions appeared to be headed to March Madness. At first, Van Pelt wondered why the NCAA wouldn't release a bracket but then saw the reason, saying "it would be like what

you would have gotten for Christmas and Christmas is cancelled."

Van Pelt is trying not to look ahead because the situation can change on a dime and because it can be an unsettling feeling. He has received texts and calls from friends, family and athletes wondering the same thing as he is — what type of show are they going to do?

One thing that Van Pelt is

planning on doing is showcasing those who have had their seasons cut short. He sent out a tweet on Friday asking people to nominate high school and college seniors to spotlight.

"In the absence of live content, we can do storytelling and acknowledge those who we know are out there that had their season end. There are quite a few people that we can shine a light on," he said. □

Anti-doping body ready to look into allegations about Fury

LONDON (AP) — Britain's anti-doping body is expected to look into allegations in a newspaper report in which a farmer said he was offered money to provide an alibi in support of Tyson Fury for a case involving the world heavyweight champion.

Fury and his cousin Hughie were handed retrospective two-year bans by UK Anti-Doping in 2017 after initially testing positive in 2015 for nandrolone, which they blamed on eating uncastrated wild boar meat.

In the case, farmer Martin Carefoot said he provided the Furys with wild boar. But he has backtracked in an interview with British newspaper The Mail on

Sunday, saying he was offered 25,000 pounds (nearly \$31,000) to make up the story in order to aid their case.

Boxing promoter Frank Warren, who currently works with Tyson Fury, has described the farmer's claims as "outrageous" and "a load of rubbish."

"We'll leave this with UKAD to look into and don't expect it to go any further," Warren said.

Asked for comment on the new claims about the Furys' anti-doping case, UKAD said: "We will always review any potential evidence in relation to any anti-doping offense, and take investigatory action where necessary."

UKAD urged anyone with information that could be of interest to contact its organization and said it will only comment on an investigation when it's concluded, and only then if there was a successful prosecution.

Neither Fury has publicly commented on the newspaper story. Tyson Fury's representatives, MTK Global, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Tyson Fury beat Deontay Wilder in Las Vegas last month to become WBC champion. In November 2015 — after he tested positive for nandrolone, but before he was charged and subsequently handed a



Tyson Fury, left, of England, hits Deontay Wilder during a WBC heavyweight championship boxing match Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

ban — he became a WBA, IBF and WBO champion by beating Wladimir Klitschko. WBC champion Mauricio Sulaiman told The Sun that the issue "does not impact

on him (Fury) being our heavyweight world champion" because Fury was "not involved with the WBC" at the time of his case with UKAD. □

Google sibling Verily launches COVID-19 screening website

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Google sister company Verily has launched a website to screen people who think they might have COVID-19 and point them to testing sites. But you probably can't use it to get tested quite yet.

Verily, a health tech company owned by Google parent Alphabet, launched the screening tool Sunday night for those that live in or near Santa Clara County and San Mateo County south of San Francisco.

As of Monday morning, the screening form said it was "unable to schedule more appointments at this time." Verily said the actual testing is conducted by health care providers from different organizations and Verily is in charge of "clinical oversight."

Some people won't even get that far. Answering "yes" to having severe symptoms, for instance, leads the site to explain that "in-person COVID-19 testing



In this Feb. 14, 2018, file photo the logo for Alphabet appears on a screen at the Nasdaq MarketSite in New York.

Associated Press

through this program is not the right fit." It then suggests medical attention.

The sites are "not prepared to provide medical attention," a Verily spokeswoman said.

For most people, the new

coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneu-

monia. The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe ill-

ness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than 58,000 have so far recovered.

The screening website is managed through Verily's Project Baseline, an initiative to collect more information on people's health to map and bolster community health.

Verily launched the screening website quickly over the weekend after President Donald Trump gave an exaggerated and misleading account of it during a press conference last Friday, before Verily had announced the project.

Verily announced the screening process in a blog post this weekend, saying it intends to start with the highest risk people in the Bay Area, and hopefully expand the service if testing becomes more widely available. □

U.S. providers offer free Wi-Fi for 60 days

BOSTON (AP) — U.S. internet and wireless providers have announced temporary measures to make getting online less expensive and onerous as enforced social distancing due to the new coronavirus forces more human interaction online.

Most notable is Comcast's free public Wi-Fi for all for 60 days, effective Saturday. Major metropolitan areas are thick with Comcast's Xfinity-branded hot-spots.

"I don't get to say this often: Bravo Comcast!" tweeted Alex Stamos, a Stanford University internet security expert.

Home-based Xfinity hot-spots are not included, said Comcast spokesman Joel Shadle, but Wi-Fi access points in public locations and at small businesses are. AT&T and Charter Communications also announced free public Wi-Fi for 60 days, with Charter offering

free broadband for households with students through college age who don't already have a subscription. Verizon was among the many providers to also announce a moratorium on late fees and disconnections.

T-Mobile announced that it would provide unlimited smartphone data to all current subscribers and increase the data allowance to schools and students using their digital learning programs.

Cox said it would increase speeds on low-cost broadband plans and Sprint said it would give subscribers unlimited data for 60 days, among other changes. Comcast and AT&T also temporarily lifted data caps.

The announcements followed a plea Thursday to internet providers by Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia and 17 other colleagues in the Senate. □

France fines Apple \$1.2 billion for anti-competitive acts



In this March 15, 2020 file photo, a worker cleans the Apple Store on the Champs-Elysees avenue in Paris.

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French regulators fined Apple 1.1 billion euros (\$1.2 billion) on Monday for striking deals to keep prices high, in the biggest-ever such sanction by France's Competition Authority.

The agency said Apple and top re-sellers agreed to align prices with Apple's own pricing for its iPads and some other products.

The deals did not concern iPhones. Calling the fine "disheartening," Apple defended its operations in a statement saying its "investment and innovation supports over 240,000 jobs across the country."

Apple added that: "It relates to practices from over a decade ago and discards thirty years of legal precedent that all compa-

nies in France rely on with an order that will cause chaos for companies across all industries."

Two "premium" French Apple re-sellers, Tech Data and Ingram Micro, were also fined a total of 139 million euros (\$155 million). The competition authority said Apple and the re-sellers agreed not to compete.

"Apple abusively exploited" distributors' dependence on the tech giant, the authority wrote, and "prevented competition among different Apple distribution channels." And that, in turn, hurt consumers. □



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AP Explains: What did the Federal Reserve do Sunday and why?

WASHINGTON (AP) — Brandishing an array of financial weapons, the Federal Reserve announced extraordinary action Sunday to try to blunt the heavy damage the coronavirus outbreak has begun to inflict on the U.S. economy.

It's slashing its benchmark interest rate to near zero. It's buying \$700 billion in bonds. It's moving aggressively to smooth disruptions in the Treasury market.

And it's prepared to do more.

The surprise intervention was an acknowledgement by the Fed that the economy seems suddenly on the brink of recession and a signal that it will do all it can to minimize the blow to households, companies and the economy.

Collectively, its actions are intended to keep markets functioning and lending flowing to businesses and consumers. Otherwise, as revenue dries up for countless small businesses that have suddenly lost customers, these employers could be forced to lay off workers or even seek bankruptcy protection.

By slashing its benchmark short-term rate and pumping hundreds of billions of dollars into the financial system, the Fed's moves recalled the emergency action it took at the height of the financial crisis. Starting in 2008, the Fed cut its key rate to near zero and kept it there for seven years. The

central bank has now returned that rate — which influences many consumer and business loans — to its record-low level.

And yet Chairman Jerome Powell acknowledged in a conference call with reporters that the Fed's action isn't likely to prevent the recession. The main reason: The economy is coming to a standstill because of the necessary behavioral changes being made across the country to stem the viral outbreak — an avoidance of travel, shopping and mass gatherings.

Rather, the economic outlook, the Fed recognizes, depends mainly on how quickly the United States can arrest the spread of the virus.

So what, exactly, did the Fed announce Sunday? And why?

THE FED SLASHED ITS BENCHMARK RATE TO NEARLY ZERO:

The Fed cut its short-term rate by a full percentage point, its steepest cut since the financial crisis in 2008, to a range of zero to 0.25%. That is the lowest level since December 2015, when the Fed raised rates for the first time after leaving them at nearly zero for seven years. Over time, this move should lower a broad range of borrowing costs for things like homes, credit cards and autos. Powell said that while the move is intended

to lower borrowing costs now, it would become even more important once the outbreak passes and consumers and businesses are confident enough to ramp up spending again.

President Donald Trump has urged the Fed to consider cutting rates below zero, but Powell said the Fed isn't considering that now.

"We do not see negative rates as an appropriate policy in the United States," he said on the conference call Sunday.

IT WILL BUY AT LEAST \$700 BILLION IN BONDS

On Monday, the Fed will start buying at least \$500 billion in Treasury securities and at least \$200 billion of mortgage-backed securities issued by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Those purchases are intended to smooth the functioning of the Treasury bond market and mortgage lending and to keep long-term borrowing rates down.

The Treasury market is the largest and most important such market in the world, because yields on Treasur-



Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell speaks during a news conference, Tuesday, March 3, 2020, to discuss an announcement from the Federal Open Market Committee, in Washington.

ies influence interest rates on many other loans and are used to price other global financial assets. Last week, banks and other large investors were unable to sell all the 10-year Treasuries they wanted to unload — pressure that inflated rates in that market. The Fed's buying is intended to plug that gap and keep rates low.

"When stresses arise in the Treasury market, they can reverberate throughout financial markets and the

entire economy," Powell said.

IT WILL RELAX BANKS' RESERVE AND BUFFER REQUIREMENTS

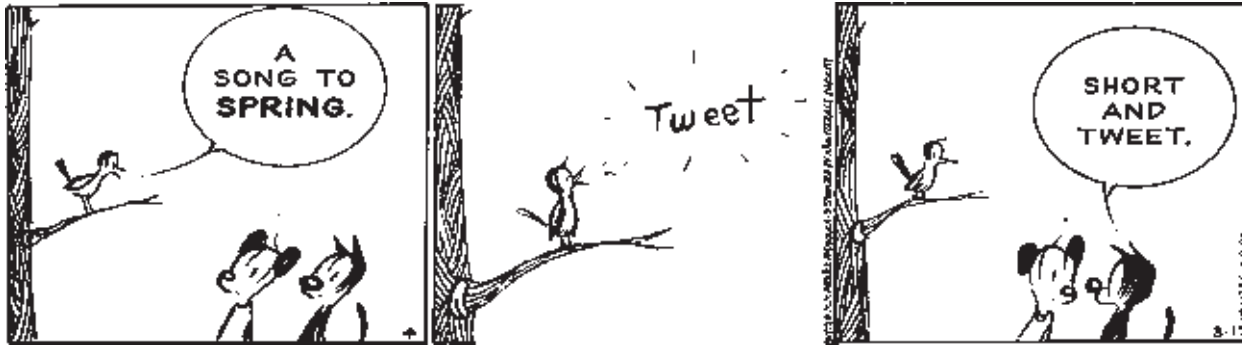
The Fed said it has dropped its requirement that banks hold cash equal to 10% of their customers' deposits, thereby allowing banks to lend that money instead. It also said that banks can use additional cash buffers that were imposed after the 2008 financial crisis for lending. □

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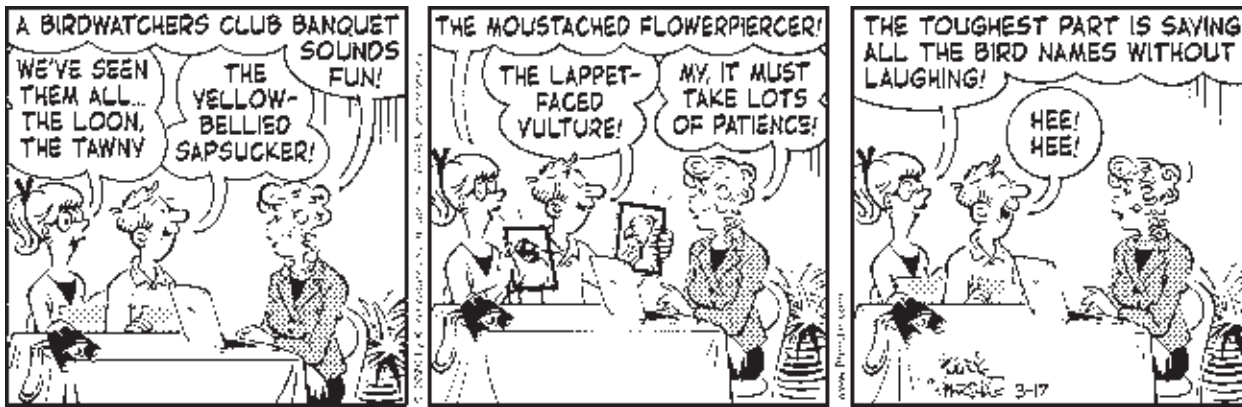
Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	2				8			
4	7		2	3	7		1	5
	4		3		6		7	
	8						4	
	2		9		5		8	
5	4					9		2
			4	7	1			
	3					7		

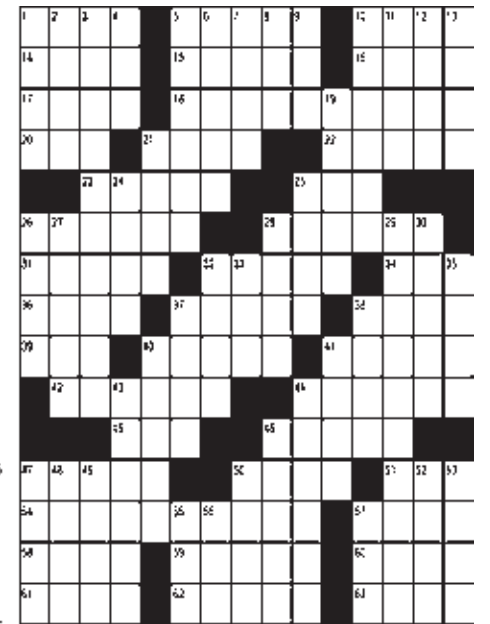
Difficulty Level ★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

8	5	4	9	2	6	7	1	3
6	9	2	3	7	1	5	4	8
7	3	1	5	8	4	9	6	2
1	4	3	6	9	2	8	5	7
2	6	8	7	4	5	1	3	9
5	7	9	8	1	3	6	2	4
9	2	5	1	3	8	4	7	6
3	8	6	4	5	7	2	9	1
4	1	7	2	6	9	3	8	5

- ACROSS**
- 1 Tear to ... shed
 - 5 ... point center of attention
 - 10 Curved lines
 - 14 Yodeling effect
 - 15 Bakery allure
 - 16 Beg ... a card game
 - 17 Harbor bird
 - 18 ... enemy; ma ... gan sh
 - 20 Without further
 - 21 Violent harsh
 - 22 Refresh
 - 23 Sounds of pain
 - 25 Violent ... substandard
 - 26 Reproach
 - 28 Most recent news
 - 31 Began the day
 - 32 Tranquility
 - 34 Water's hope
 - 35 Nearly all
 - 37 Flower shrub or tree
 - 38 Wraparound dress
 - 39 Part of the Greek alphabet
 - 40 Way to go
 - 41 Traveler's stop
 - 42 Respect greatly
 - 44 Taunt; laugh at
 - 45 Pink meat
 - 46 Game of chance
 - 47 Thread holder
 - 50 Brooches
 - 51 Org. for Raptors & Rockets
 - 54 Waker
 - 57 Rough up
 - 58 Bouquet; greenery
 - 59 Misrepresent
 - 60 2nd Amendment subject
 - 61 Effortless
 - 62 Like a chimney
 - 63 Secretary's 200-2000



Created by Jacqueline E. Matthews 3/17/20

- DOWN**
- 1 Alpha's follower
 - 2 Treated a scrain
 - 3 Blood clot formation
 - 4 Vase delivery
 - 5 Widespread food shortage
 - 6 Doctorate exams
 - 7 Drape puller
 - 8 Little Rock Simon & Garfunkel hit
 - 9 Notes of the scale
 - 10 Stock firm
 - 11 Binde strap
 - 12 Mr. Peanur's crop
 - 13 As ... as ... masses
 - 19 Wooden box
 - 21 ... uc reconno
 - 24 Remove from power
 - 25 Treaty
 - 26 Freeway entrance
 - 27 Uneven
 - 28 The Beatles' "Ferry"
 - 29 Standing sh
 - 30 Exhausted
 - 32 Little Jack Homer's prize
 - 33 Munch on
 - 35 ... uc ... accumulate
 - 37 "The Raven" or "To a Mouse"
 - 38 Kind ... variety

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	H	U	T	U	S	E	S	I	C	O	N
C	A	N	E	S	P	E	N	T	C	A	M
A	M	B	L	E	S	E	D	A	T	I	V
T	S	E	R	V	E	R	E	C	E	N	T
A	D	E	P	T	C	A	L				
B	A	T	O	N	S	H	R	E	D	S	
A	B	A	T	E	T	R	E	E	S	E	A
B	O	B	S	P	R	I	E	S	B	L	U
Y	U	L	S	H	O	O	K	A	L	I	C
T	E	S	T	E	D			P	R	O	B
								P	E	A	R
E	C	H	O	E	S	I	R	E	R	F	D
C	H	A	R	L	A	T	A	N	S	C	A
R	U	S	T	N	A	G	S	S	A	T	A
U	M	P	S	T	U	B	E	B	E	N	S

- 43 Royal domain
- 44 Team from New York
- 45 Like a rose stem
- 46 Beast of burden
- 46 Permissible
- 47 Out of harm's way
- 48 Earnest request
- 49 Rowers' needs
- 50 Horseback sport
- 52 ... into ... meer
- 53 Unexpectedly
- 53 Part of AKA
- 55 NBC rival
- 56 Name for 13 popes
- 57 From porch lien

COVID-19 and beyond: World 'nowhere near' ready, expert says

By **JAMEY KEATEN**
Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — A leading epidemiologist who heads a U.N.-backed alliance that helps get vaccines to developing countries said Friday the world is "nowhere near" proper readiness for outbreaks like the new coronavirus, insisting work is needed now to prepare for the next one. Dr. Seth Berkley, CEO of GAVI-The Vaccine Alliance, noted studies alluding to the existence of more than 30,000 coronaviruses, and said outbreaks like the COVID-19 pandemic could well become more likely.

"With increasing population, with increasing environmental destruction, we are likely to see an accelerating rate of these types of outbreaks," he said from GAVI headquarters overlooking Geneva.

"We are nowhere near where we need to be to be globally prepared for these types of outbreaks," said Berkley, whose organization brings together industry, governments, United Nations agencies like the World Health Organization and UNICEF, and charities like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

With the SARS and MERS coronavirus outbreaks earlier this century, initial interest in developing vaccines amid those crises ended up waning when the outbreaks faded — and some worry about a repeat with the new coronavirus down the road.

Berkeley hopes this time will be different.

"Given the magnitude of this outbreak, I would think it would be foolish for us not to complete vaccine development and make sure it was available for potential future outbreaks," he said. □

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Assistant Director
Xiomara Arends

Editor in Chief
Linda Reijnders
(linda.reijnders@cspnv.com)
Liza Koolman (Management assistant)

Editors
Richard Brooks

Sales
Linda Reijnders
(linda.reijnders@cspnv.com)
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds
classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection
accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website
Juan Luis Pinto
Pilar Flores

Columnists
Anthony Croes
Joris Zantvoort
Shanella Pantophlet
Steve Francees
Thais Franken

Weststraat 22
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212598

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1 BR wk 12/13 \$9,5 K each
Birdie 10 ground floor
33/34 weeks remain

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Sunday check in
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UN: Last year was second-warmest and decade was hottest ever

By EDITH M. LEDERER

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

Last year was the second warmest on record, the past decade was the hottest in human history and January was the warmest January since 1850, the head of the U.N. weather agency said Tuesday.

Petteri Taalas, secretary-general of the World Meteorological Organization also said Europe had a record-warm winter, and “we have also broken records in (emitting) carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide,” three greenhouse gases that cause global warming.

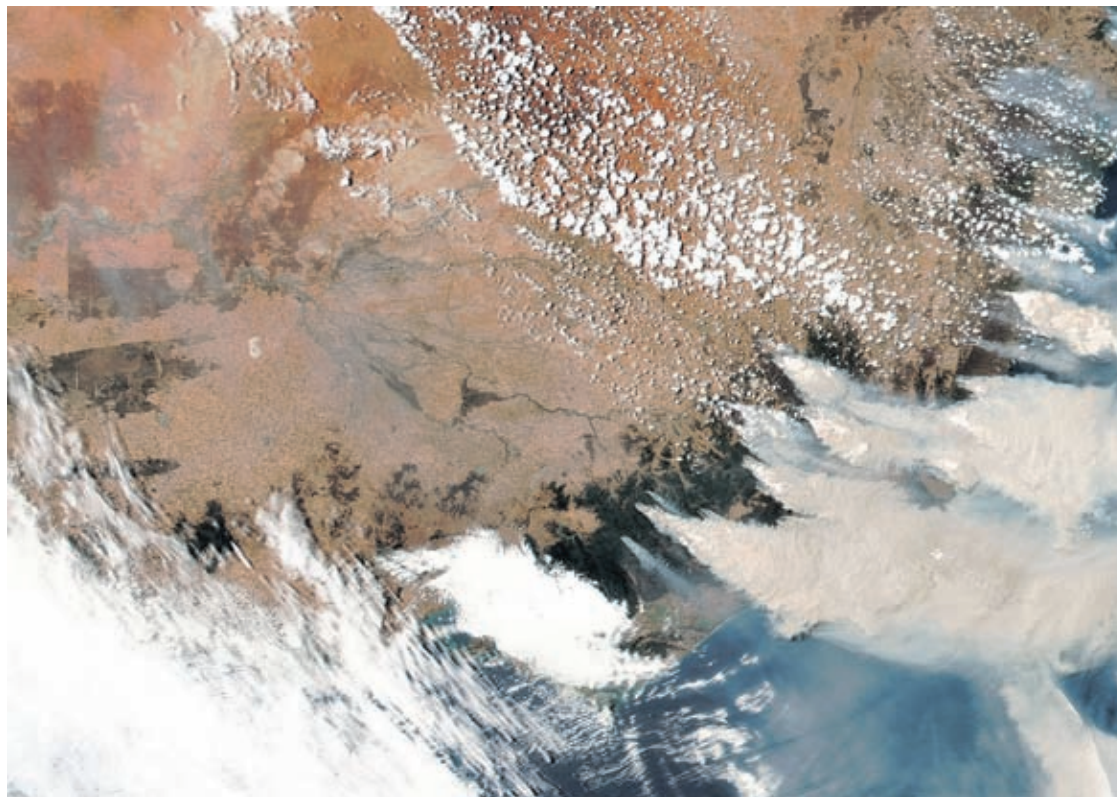
Taalas said at a briefing on the agency’s annual State of the Global Climate 2019 report that carbon dioxide has contributed two-thirds of global warming, “and its lifetime is of several hundreds of years — so it’s a problem that doesn’t go away if you let these concentrations continue.”

Sitting beside Taalas, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said: “Greenhouse gas concentrations are at the highest levels in 3 million years — when the Earth’s temperature was as much as three degrees hotter and sea levels some 15 meters higher.”

He added: “Ocean heat is at a record level, with temperatures rising at the equivalent of five Hiroshima bombs a second.”

Taalas said the warming of the oceans has led to unusual tropical storms, including one in Mozambique in March 2019 that was the strongest in the Southern Hemisphere “at least for the past hundred years.”

He said there is also an estimate “that sea water is the most acid in 25 million years ... and that’s going to have



This satellite image provided by NASA on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020 shows wildfires in Victoria and New South Wales, Australia.

negative impacts on the sea ecosystems.”

Taalas also pointed to forest fires causing a lot of emissions, in the Arctic and Australia where “they were, again, record breaking.”

“Smoke and pollutants from damaging fires in Australia circumnavigated the globe, causing a spike in carbon dioxide emissions,” he said.

Guterres said there is no time to lose “if we are to avert climate catastrophe.”

Many scientists say the use of fossil fuels, which are one of the main sources of greenhouse gases, need to end by the middle of the century if average temperatures on Earth are to rise no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) by 2100, the target set in the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

Guterres said the world is way off track for meeting the target, and “we have to aim high at the

next climate conference in Glasgow in November.”

So far, he said, 70 countries have announced they

are committed to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, joined by cities, banks, businesses and others, but

this still represents only one-quarter of global emissions. “The largest emitters must commit or our efforts will be in vain,” Guterres said.

He said the Group of 20 major economic powers account for 80% of world emissions.

In the coming months, the U.N. will be very actively engaging Western Europe nations, the U.S., Canada, China, India, Russia and Japan “in order to have as many as possible, ideally all of them, committed to carbon neutrality in 2050,” the secretary-general said.

Guterres pointed to “good news” from the European Union, which unveiled plans last week for its first-ever climate law that would make legally binding its executive arm’s goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by mid-century.

“Let’s hope that this example can be followed by all the others,” he said. □

Europe, Russia postpone joint rover mission to Mars

By FRANK JORDANS

BERLIN (AP) — The European Space Agency and Russia’s Roscosmos said Thursday they are postponing a planned joint mission to Mars until 2022, in part due to travel restrictions resulting from the new coronavirus outbreak

The ExoMars mission was due to launch this year but concerns about possible technical problems had already prompted both agencies to discuss the delay.

“We want to make ourselves 100% sure of a successful mission,” European Space Agency Director General Jan Woerner said in a statement. “We cannot allow ourselves any margin of error. More verification activities will ensure a safe trip and the best scientific results on Mars.”

Dmitry Rogozin, the head of Roscosmos, said the delay was primarily due to technical problems, compounded by the corona-

virus outbreak, “which left our experts practically no possibility to proceed with travels to partner industries.”

The mission’s goal is to put a rover on the red planet to help determine whether there has ever been life on Mars. Scientists hope the rover, packed with high-tech instruments and named after British chemist Rosalind Franklin, will be able to dig for biological signatures of life below the martian surface and also provide further insights into the planet’s history of water.

The postponement is another setback for the ExoMars program after the 2016 launch of an orbiter and a test lander. The Trace Gas Orbiter was successfully deployed, but the Schiaparelli lander malfunctioned and crashed on the surface of Mars, highlighting the difficulty of putting a probe on the planet.

So far, the United States

is the only country to successfully land a functioning probe on Mars. NASA’s Curiosity and InSight landers are still in operation on the planet.

Three other Mars missions are planned for this summer. The United States is launching a lander, China has a lander-orbiter combo, and the United Arab Emirates is sending an orbiter.

Spacecraft can only be launched to Mars every two years, to take advantage of the best possible lineup between Earth and its neighboring planet.

NASA’s science mission chief, Thomas Zurbuchen, said ESA and Roscosmos made a “tough decision” in delaying the ExoMars mission.

“Launching & safely landing a spacecraft on Mars are extremely demanding and require many technologies & systems to function perfectly,” he wrote on Twitter. □

What now? Facing life without the entertainment world

By LEANNE ITALIE

NEW YORK (AP) — Overheard as the entertainment world stalled in response to the coronavirus outbreak: "What are we gonna do now, read books?"

That's exactly what Pamela Milam will be doing, and lots of them.

Milam is a selection reader for the Women's National Book Association, a non-profit established in 1917 to support, well, reading. She and her colleagues began a marathon this month to make it through as many as 100 books each as they help develop the organization's annual Great Group Reads list for National Reading Group Month in October.

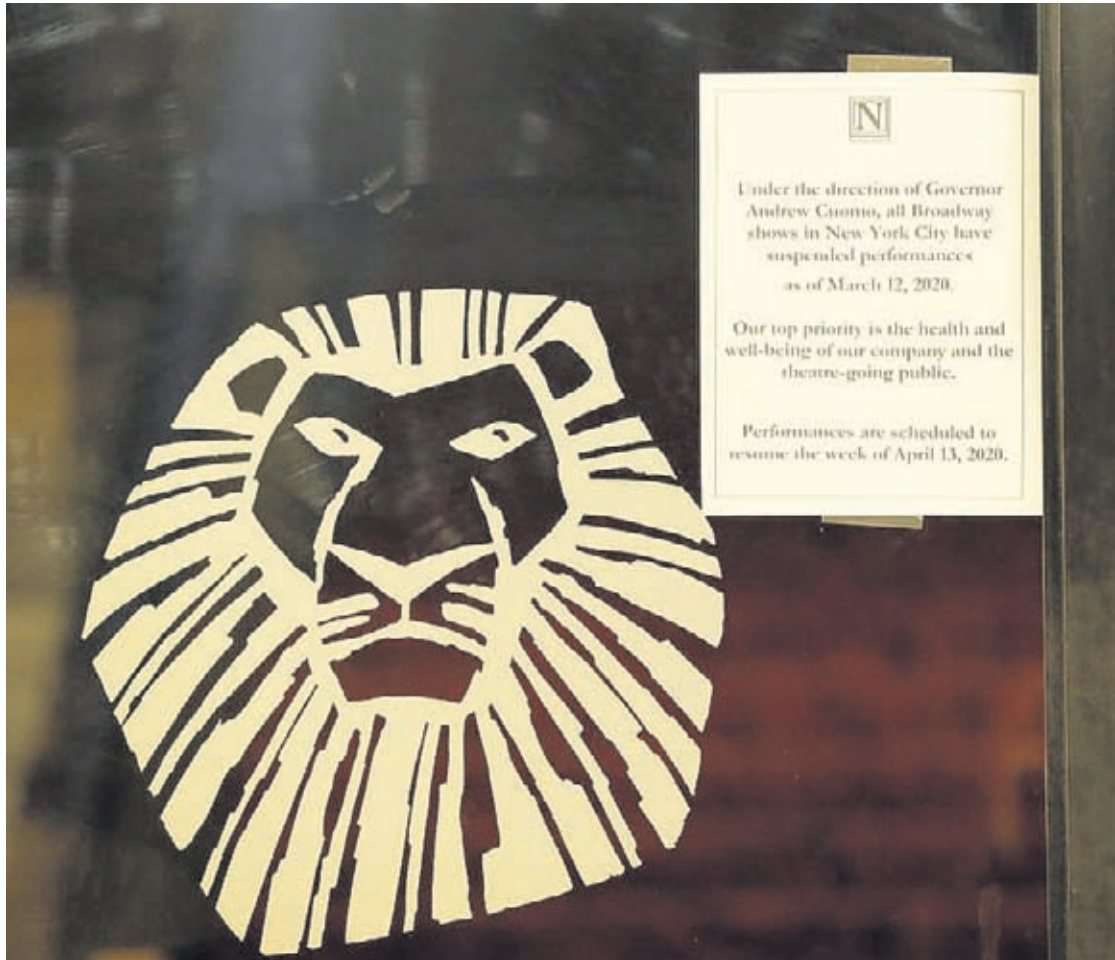
She's also an avid theater goer. She lives in the heart of Times Square and goes to the theater about once a week, but when Broadway and many other entertainments canceled, cut back seating or postponed performances last week, Milam knew exactly how she'd fill the extra time.

"I'm happy snug on my couch. I'll do my best to make the most of that," she said.

Many concert tours, awards shows, festivals, museums, sporting events and more have shut down to help "flatten the curve" as the virus spreads around the globe. Bans on big and medium-size gatherings are proliferating, prompting more people to hunker down at home.

"We're catching up on our reading. I just started 'Love in the Time of Cholera.' It seemed appropriate," said Beverly Pfeiffer in Silver Spring, Maryland, of the Gabriel Garcia Marquez classic that plays out amid an outbreak of the disease. Other people are working more, especially now that they're doing it from home. Some have upped their kitchen game by taking on fussy recipes and baking projects.

One company that offers online courses has seen a huge jump in business, as has another that sells digital photo scanning services. Interior designer Genevieve



A sign announcing the suspension of all Broadway shows is posted on a door at the Minskoff Theatre, where "The Lion King" had been playing, Thursday, March 12, 2020, in New York.

Associated Press

Gorder, co-host of the Netflix series "Stay Here," asked followers on Instagram to share home improvement goals that had been lingering at the bottom of to-do lists. Cleaning blinds, a basement sort-out and deck repairs are now on front burners.

Nicole Schaefer in Portland, Oregon, is usually out doing something. Now, she almost feels guilty about all the free time. Almost.

"I feel like now I have time to relax, if that makes sense. With my evenings freed up, I'm learning to make my own macarons. I'm making a present for my boyfriend. I'm knitting. I'm exercising as long as I want to. There's so many things to do without concerts and plays and shows to go to," she said.

There's binge-watching galore, of course, and devotees of opera and art are being treated to special live streams and virtual tours. Museums have joined a social media movement started by the Museum of the City of New York to offer art and other imagery using the hashtag #MuseumMomentofZen.

Melanie Musson isn't fo-

cused on any of that, and social distancing shouldn't be a problem. She and her husband, along with their four children, love to spend time in the mountains surrounding their Belgrade, Montana, home.

"I have so many plans that I'm actually looking forward to being forced out of social gatherings," she said. "We plan to spend time outdoors camping, hiking and fishing. The sunshine and exercise will help us be as healthy as we can be."

While Musson and others head outdoors, some folks who are shunning or shut out of their exercise classes are working out new routines at home.

Linda Johnson Mandell in Los Angeles is going another route with her giant white Labradoodle, Frankie Feldman. The 5-year-old fur

ball is a therapy dog who routinely visits patients at care centers. With new restrictions, those visits are on hold.

"So instead we're staying home, brushing up on obedience, and I'm teaching him some new tricks to amuse folks when the quarantines are lifted," Mandell said.

Cynthia Shaw in Brooklyn is a classical pianist and piano teacher who regularly gathers with students and friends who play for each other. Since many in their group of eight or so are older, including some in their 80s, they're giving up their monthly home gatherings for now, but played Sunday using a video conferencing platform instead. "Some of the older members had a hard time figuring it out, but they did," she said. "I had my computer

set up next to the piano. I played the first movement of a Beethoven sonata. People played Chopin. There was some Gershwin. I think we'll do it again."

Elsewhere, the TV binge is definitely on with some new gems on offer.

The Walt Disney Co. will release "Frozen 2" on Disney-Plus several months early to give families cooped up by the coronavirus a welcome distraction, and give its streaming service a boost.

For documentary lovers, Netflix is rolling out new features and series from acclaimed creators, including "The Innocence Files" by Liz Garbus, Alex Gibney and Roger Ross Williams; "Jeffrey Epstein: Filthy Rich" by Lisa Bryant and Joe Berlinger; and "David Attenborough: A Life on Our Planet."

"We subscribe to nearly every streaming service, or so it seems. I'm hoping to find some gold in there," said Julie Crislip in Pennington, New Jersey.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. The vast majority of people recover.

Psychotherapist Jeff Larsen in San Diego has a plan, for himself and his clients.

"It's all about slowing down," he said. "So absolutely pick up that book that's been gathering dust, watch that movie or binge-watch that TV show that you haven't had time to watch. Most importantly, it's the mindset that we, as humans, need to have going into this time period. It's always a good thing when we can slow down and simplify our lives." □





In this Feb. 9, 2020 file photo, Tom Hanks, left, and Rita Wilson arrive at the Oscars at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Australian TV journalist who met with Rita Wilson has virus

By **ROD McGUIRK**
Associated Press
CANBERRA, Australia (AP)

— An Australian television journalist said Monday he has the new coronavirus and assumes he contracted it while meeting with actress-singer Rita Wilson in Sydney.

Wilson and her husband Tom Hanks have been isolated in an Australian hospital since they were both diagnosed with COVID-19 on March 12.

Authorities said last week several contacts Hanks and Wilson had in Australia were being traced, but no other results of those efforts have been made public. Hanks had been working on a film in Australia and Wilson had concert performances in the country before they were diagnosed. Nine Network entertainment editor Richard Wilkins said he was tested be-

cause he met Wilson at the Sydney Opera House on March 7 and again at Nine's Sydney studio on March 9. The result came back positive on Sunday.

"I'm surprisingly very well," Wilkins told Nine by Face-time from his Sydney home, where he has self-isolated since Wilson's diagnosis. "You could've knocked me over with a feather last night when I got that call. It took me a couple of minutes to reel from the news that they gave me. But I feel fine. I feel 100%," Wilkins added.

The virus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, for most people but can be severe in some cases, especially older adults and people with existing health problems. People with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may

need six weeks to recover. The 65-year-old journalist said he could only assume that he had been infected by Wilson.

"We're assuming this is from Rita. It may not be. They've all said it could be anyone, anywhere, any time, such is the prevalence of this thing," Wilkins said. "I was having a chat to her and that's probably my best guess as to what happened," he added.

Wilkins was one of 37 new case confirmed over 24 hours in New South Wales state, bringing the state total to 171. The increase was the largest for Australia's most populous state in a day. Authorities say at least 67 cases arrived from overseas and 44 were transmitted locally while the remainder could not be determined or were still under investigation. Australia has about 300 cases overall. □

PH VIP At Paseo Herencia
582-3693

PBP Palm Beach Plaza Mall
586.0074

caribbeancinemas.com
Caribbean Cinemas Aruba

MARCH 12-18

AGRIPPINA

PBP SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1:00PM

BLOODSHOT

VIN DIESEL | EIZA GONZALEZ

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH	MON-THU	6:10	8:40
	FRI	6:10	8:40 11:00
VIP	SAT	3:40	6:10 8:40 11:00
	SUN	3:40	6:10 8:40

PBP	VIP	MON-FRI	4:25 6:55 9:25
		SAT-SUN	1:55 4:25 6:55 9:25

CXC

MON-THU	5:20	7:50
FRI	5:20	7:50 10:20
SAT	2:50	5:20 7:50 10:20
SUN	2:50	5:20 7:50

NEW THIS WEEK!

MY SPY

DAVE BAUTISTA | CHLOE COLEMAN

PH	MON-THU	6:10	8:30
	FRI	6:10	8:30 10:50
VIP	SAT	3:50	6:10 8:30 10:50
	SUN	3:50	6:10 8:30

PBP	MON-THU	5:10	7:30
	FRI	5:10	7:30 10:00
VIP	SAT	2:50	5:10 7:30 10:00
	SUN	2:50	5:10 7:30

PBP	MON-FRI	4:40	7:00 9:20
	SAT-SUN	2:20	4:40 7:00 9:20

ALSO SHOWING!

I STILL BELIEVE

BRITT ROBERTSON | K.J. APA

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH	MON-THU	6:00	8:35
	FRI	6:00	8:35 11:10
VIP	SAT	3:25	6:00 8:35 11:10
	SUN	3:25	6:00 8:35

PBP	MON-THU	3:55	6:30 9:05
	FRI	3:55	6:30 9:05 11:35
SAT	1:20	3:55	6:30 9:05 11:35
SUN	1:20	3:55	6:30 9:05

ONWARD

Disney PIXAR

TOM HOLLAND | CHRIS PRATT

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH	MON-THU	5:50	8:10
	FRI	5:50	8:10 10:30
	SAT	3:30	5:50 8:10 10:30
	SUN	3:30	5:50 8:10

PBP	MON-FRI	4:20	6:40 9:00
	SAT-SUN	2:00	4:20 6:40 9:00

THE INVISIBLE MAN

ELISABETH MOSS | ALDIS HODGE

PH	MON-THU	7:30	
	FRI	7:30	10:15
	SAT	2:00	4:45 7:30 10:15
	SUN	2:00	4:45 7:30

PBP	MON-THU	3:55	6:35 9:15
	FRI	3:55	6:35 9:15 11:20
SAT	1:15	3:55	6:35 9:15 11:20
SUN	1:15	3:55	6:35 9:15

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

JAMES MARSDEN | JIM CARRÉY

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH	MON-THU	6:00	8:20
	FRI	6:00	8:20 10:40
	SAT	3:40	6:00 8:20 10:40
	SUN	3:40	6:00 8:20

BAD BOYS FOR LIFE

WILL SMITH | MARTIN LAWRENCE

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PBP	MON-SUN	9:10	
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OPENING MARCH 19: A QUIET PLACE PART II

THE MAGIC OF THE MOVIES ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE

Show goes on: DiDonato, Beczala sing opera from apartment



From left to right: tenor Piotr Beczala, Metropolitan Opera assistant conductor Howard Watkins (at piano), soprano Joyce DiDonato and Metropolitan Opera Orchestra principal harp Emmanuel Ceysson perform excerpts of Massenet's "Werther" at DiDonato's apartment Sunday, March 15, 2020 in New York.

Associated Press

By **RONALD BLUM**
Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP)

— Joyce DiDonato and Piotr Beczala made sure the show went on, albeit in an unusual format and venue — from the living room of DiDonato's New York City apartment.

The American mezzo-soprano and Polish tenor had been scheduled to star in Massenet's "Werther" at the Metropolitan Opera starting Monday. The Met's shutdown because of the coronavirus outbreak caused the cancellation of the first

five of six scheduled performances through March 31. Accompanied by Met assistant conductor Howard Watkins at the piano and principal harp Emmanuel Ceysson, the pair performed excerpts for nearly 90 minutes Sunday that were streamed live on DiDonato's Facebook and Instagram pages.

Given that many artists have lost at least two months of income because of force majeure provisions in their contracts, they used the livestream to ask for donations for the American Guild of Musical Artists relief fund and Artist Relief Tree.

Beczala, singing the title role, was in a suit and open collar shirt, and DiDonato, as Charlotte, wore a black dress.

"Since we can't sing on Monday night, we thought let's get together in this salon, like they used to do in the old days, which we might have to do in the new days, too," she said. □

Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: Hook and Cook your Own Fish!



Oranjestad- Renaissance Marina Downtown is home to the Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood. Herby senior and Herby Junior both share a passion and love for fishing. They know what the local waters have to offer and what fresh fish really means. Over 30 years ago, the idea for the fishing charter was born.

Captain Herby would catch the fish to be served at the restaurant the same day. That concept still lives, what is 'hooked' during the day is cooked in the evening at the restaurant.

Herby shares his experience with his crew, who take out guests daily on their tournament rigged 35ft twin engine

Bertram "Driftwood" or on their more spacious 37ft twin engine Bertram called "Living Easy". Both yachts are available for charters from 8am to 12 noon, or from 1 to 5pm (6-hour trips also available). To book a fishing charter visit www.driftwoodfishingcharters.com or call Herbert direct at (297)-5924040.



Have an authentic seafood dining experience at Driftwood Restaurant, situated in the characteristic downtown Oranjestad. This comfortable downtown restaurant has a long tradition (30 years) of serving the freshest fish, the biggest shrimp, and the most succulent Caribbean Lobster. Opening Hours: 5:00pm to 10:30pm (closed on Sundays) For reservations visit www.driftwoodaruba.com or call (297)-5832515 Address: Klipstraat 12. Oranjestad, Aruba

AMC Theaters to limit attendance to 50 people per showing

NEW YORK (AP) — AMC Theaters, the largest movie chain in North America, will limit attendance at all screenings to 50 people to adhere to the CDC's latest social distancing guidelines.

Cinemas in New York City and Los Angeles on Sunday were order closed by the city's respective mayors. Many art house theaters nationwide have also shuttered.

But the largest chains in North America — AMC, Regal Cinemas, Cinemark — have tried to keep their doors open. Over the weekend, the chains began to limit theater capacity to 50%. They have pledged to thoroughly clean theaters in between showings.

AMC said in any theaters smaller than 100 seats, it wouldn't fill them more than half. Regal and Cinemark didn't immediately respond to messages Mon-

day.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

Ticket sales plunged to their lowest levels in at least 20 years at the weekend box office for U.S. and Canadian theaters. Not since a quiet September weekend in 2000 has weekend box office revenue been so low, according to data firm Comscore. More people went to the movies the

weekend after Sept. 11, 2001.

Most of Europe's cinemas have shuttered in recent days, as have theaters in China, India, Lebanon and Kuwait. Those closures have already slashed international grosses. Health officials are urging for those who can stay home to do so, to help stymie the spread of the virus.

Much of the entertainment world has shut down. Broadway theaters, major museums and theme parks have closed their doors. Concerts have been called off: Elton John was the latest as Monday he announced dates in North America for his "Farewell Yellow Brick Road" tour from March 26 to May 2 would be postponed: later dates remain unchanged. Festivals including South by Southwest in Austin, Texas, and the Tribeca Film Festival in New York have been



People enter an AMC theater Saturday, March 14, 2020, in Los Angeles. Californians wanting to escape the new reality of the coronavirus at the movies, casino or amusement park are running into the six foot rule.

Associated Press

canceled or delayed. Most live-action film and TV production has been put on hiatus.

Hollywood also has postponed most of its upcoming releases. Next week's most anticipated movie, "A Quiet Place Part 2," has been removed from the schedule. Other major re-

leases, including Disney's "Mulan" and the James Bond film "Die Another Day" have been put off.

That means that even if movie theaters remain open in the coming weeks, they will have little to play. Theaters could potentially play older films to help them get by. □



This Jan. 23, 2020 photo shows an Irish coffee in Amagansett, N.Y.

Associated Press

The secret to a great Irish Coffee isn't what you'd expect

By **ELIZABETH KARMELE**
Associated Press

Last summer, I traveled to Ireland to learn about Irish whiskey, a spirit I knew relatively little about. The Irish drink I knew better was Guinness, which I enjoyed occasionally and use to make my favorite Chocolate Chocolate Cake.

Turns out, I am not alone in my unfamiliarity with Irish whiskey. Today's Irish whiskey industry is relatively young. It all but died out after Ireland gained independence from Britain in 1922. In 1980, there were only two distilleries, Bushmills and Midleton, makers of Jameson and other well-known brands. Today there are 31. Irish whiskey, like other whiskeys today, is booming.

Distilleries now are making balanced and nuanced

whiskeys that are best sipped slowly like a good scotch, bourbon or rye.

Before I got to Ireland, I wondered if Irish Coffee there is like German Chocolate Cake in Germany — an American creation. But almost everywhere we went, we were served an Irish Coffee. And they were delicious. Way better than anything I had experienced in the States.

These Irish Coffees were served in glass Irish Coffee mugs, some plain, some fancy and one even cut crystal. The transparent glass and the mug's telltale shape signaled that it was time for a pick-me-up.

Some versions of Irish Coffee in Ireland were simple and plain, strong with whiskey. Others had been accessorized with a sprinkle of cocoa or cinnamon and

sweetened with vanilla-bean syrup, chocolate or caramel like a fancy coffee drink. They were all good, but for me, one stood out.

After lunch one day, we went to the Stag's Head pub in Dublin. It sits at the end of a pedestrian street and has been a beloved part of the Dublin landscape for 250 years this year. It is a warm, convivial space, the perfect place to experience a neat Irish whiskey with ½-pint of Guinness on the side — my favorite order during my trip.

After consuming my first round, I ordered an Irish Coffee “in the name of research.” I was not disappointed. The coffee was flavorful but light, not bitter at all. It complemented and softened the sharp Irish whiskey; when you sipped it through the rich pillows

of fresh, thickened cream, the bite of the whiskey was tamed, and it was heavenly.

The Irish Coffee was so exceptional that I asked the manager of the pub for the secret. He was hesitant at first to tell me, and then said I wouldn't believe it. I anticipated that he was going to say it was Ireland's exceptional cream. But that wasn't it.

The secret to a great Irish Coffee, it turns out, is instant coffee.

That's right, the instant coffee you can get at the grocery store. He told me you can't use coffee that is too strong, too flavorful or, in his words, too “good.” Those coffees will upset the balance of the drink.

So, you need instant coffee, Irish whiskey and the best cream you can find, thick-

ened but not whipped. Layer the coffee, whiskey and cream in that order in a tall mug. In Ireland, they use a heatproof glass mug so you can see all the layers. I succumbed and purchased an Irish Coffee mug so I could recreate the experience at home, but you can serve it in any heatproof mug.

When I came home, I started making the Dublin pub's Irish Coffee with instant espresso powder because that's what I had on hand. A spoonful of the powder mixed with 5 ounces of boiling water made the base. I added 1 ounce of Irish whiskey and a big dollop of thickened, heavy cream. It's important that the water is boiling, because the cream is cold and will cool off the coffee as you drink it. □